

International Theological Seminary

**Guidelines for Effective Leadership Transition Between Existing and Emerging
Leaders in the Evangelical Churches of Ethiopia**

A Dissertation Submitted to
The Faculty of International Theological Seminary
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Ministry

by

Yirdaw T. Bogale

Los Angeles, California
June, 2018

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Dissertation Approval

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Abstract

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International Theological Seminary

Mentor: David McKinley

Most nations in the world face many problems and crisis due to their leaders. This is particularly true in most African countries. Let alone nations, churches are facing leadership crisis and as a result, in many places, a conflict exists between the churches and its followers. Specifically, the absence of effective leadership effective leadership transition between the old and new generations has caused division, conflict and damaged the image of the church in Ethiopia. Due to the leaderships' inability to practice effective leadership transition, the Ethiopian church has lost its credibility among the society.

Therefore, identifying the root cause of this problem and filling the gap between generations by training the existing and emerging leaders as well as preparing them to plan ahead of time to identify, nurture and prepare potential future leaders will help bring healing to the body of Christ in Ethiopia. It is essential to plan for leadership transition to have effective leaders and to expand the kingdom of God with a healthy church growth.

Therefore; the ministry research study is focused on explaining the relevance of effective leadership transition, its impact on healthy church growth and effective church leadership in the church in Ethiopia. After chapter one, the introduction, chapter two is a

review of literature about the concept of leadership transition. Its general perspective including secular, political, cultural, religious and Christian view of the issue.

In chapter three the biblical and theological basis for the effective leadership transition is widely discussed and explained. Effective leadership transition is a planned and well-intentioned act of God's servants in the bible in both the Old and New Testaments. On the other hand, when it lacks the preparation for an effective leadership transition the result is terrible and chaotic.

Chapter four focuses on the methodology used in the research work and the analysis and discussion of findings of questionnaires, interviews, and in general looking the qualitative approach used for the deeper research on the topic. Chapter five focuses on personal application, recommendations, and conclusion of the research done in this very important and timely subject.

Abstract length: 352 words.

English Language Disclaimer

As a non-native speaker of English, I am aware that my writing may at times lack clarity, though I have attempted to write as clearly as possible. Please note that the primary purpose of this work is to acknowledge a theory and to apply it to a particular context. I appreciate the editorial assistance I have received from various individuals, but acknowledge that the responsibility for this work is entirely my own.

I dedicated this work for my all-time lover who saved and called me to live in his house and serve Him, God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit; and to my beloved wife, Yirgedu Yemane and my kids Yeabtesga and Kalkidan, who are always by my side.

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First, I give thanks to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave His life for me and called me in to his house as a friend and trusts me in to His service as a servant.

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Above all I want to give all glory and thanksgiving to the all-time Leader of mine the Almighty God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1. Background of the Study

Ethiopia is Africa's oldest independent country and the second most populous nation in Africa next to Nigeria with approximately 100 million people. Apart from a five year occupation by Italy, it is the only country in Africa to have never been colonized and it continuous to be a symbol of African independence. Historically, Ethiopia has never had a peaceful and successful leadership transition. For many years, the transition in leadership happened through conflict and bloodshed. As the oldest Christian nation in Africa, Ethiopia has a long history in relation to the Old Testament Jewish culture and religion as well as to the New Testament's Christianity. Since the days of King Solomon Jewish culture and religion had spread in Ethiopia, Ethiopia has been and continuous to be a home to many Jews. One of the first gentile countries who heard the gospel from the first disciples is Ethiopia, as it is recorded in the Bible in the book of Acts 8. It is believed since then the New Testament Christianity is one of the dominant religion in Ethiopia.

Even though Ethiopia poses such a long and rich history and natural resources, its' development of leadership and the transition from generation to generation has not been effective and successful in many ways. Like other African countries the impact of the absence of transparency in leadership and effective leadership transition has left the continent behind.

BBC has reported that President Obama, during his speech for the African leaders while he was in Ethiopia on African Union Summit, had said:

“The continent will not advance if its leaders refuse to step down when their terms end. Nobody should be president for life, ‘I don't understand why people want to stay so long, especially when they have got a lot of money,’ he told the 54-member AU, an apparent criticism of African leaders who have done just that. Calling on the AU to ensure leaders respect their constitutions and step down when their term ends, Mr. Obama specifically mentioned Burundi, whose president Pierre Nkurunziza has controversially been re-elected for a third term. Sometimes you will hear leaders say 'I'm the only person who can hold this nation together.' If that's true, then that leader has failed to truly build their nation.¹”

This is the real challenge for the leadership in Africa.

For long period of time the Ethiopian government was led by rulers, kings and emperors. In 1974 the military coup ended the kingship leadership and Ethiopia was led by a military dictator for long time. After many years of war another government change happened in 1991 with many bloodshed and sacrifice of innocent people. This leadership change didn't bring any change in the life of many as it was expected, but just regime change. As one African writer said, “the numerous violent or undemocratic changes in power in Africa since independence suggest a distinctive lack of difference. At the same time, most of these coups have led only to further repression and the substitution of one dictator to another.”² Effective leadership transition is vital for peace and development in the society.

On the other hand, the dominant religious denomination in the country is the Coptic Orthodox church. The way of its leadership is papal thus it's led by one appointed pope for life. Until the pop dies his leadership position never pass to another person; so, it is a life time position. Politically and religiously the custom and practical experience of

1. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa>, Obama warns on Africa leaders refusing to step down. (accessed November 20, 2017).

2. Wangari Maathai, *The Challenge for Africa*. (New York, Pantheon Books, 2009), 121.

the nation's leadership transition from one leader to the next according to its history is not encouraging peaceful and effective to a leadership transition. There is not any developed and practiced tradition concerning such successful leadership transition in the society's history.

Surprisingly, while I was writing this dissertation almost around the end of my research on April 2, 2018, after three thousand years of Ethiopian history an effective leadership transition occurred between the old and new Prime Ministers in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, between Hailemariam Desalegn and Dr. Abiy Ahmed. It was a great surprise for the whole nation. It is the first peaceful transition without bloodshed in the country's history.

On April 24, 2018, there was an official farewell ceremony held at the national palace in Addis Ababa and the former Prime minister was awarded the highest national medal for his contribution. In the farewell the new prime minister, the successor, said the following statement: "Mr. Hailemariam Desalegn ... you have made innocent contributions, specially the indispensable role you have played to ensure the smooth and peaceful transfer of power for the first time in the history of the country. Thus, is an audacious history which will be greatly remembered for generations to come."³ Hopefully after this it will continue in a better way in the land including in the church as well.

In the 1970s and 1980s Christianity in Ethiopia was highly persecuted and the churches were underground. After the fall of the Communist regime in 1991 the comparative freedom of religion was granted to the churches; since then the numerical

3. <http://www.aftamedia.com/ethiopian>, Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Holds Official Farewell to Hailemariam Desalegn, (accessed, April 25, 2018).

growth of the Evangelical churches is unbelievable and tremendous. One of the surveys showed the growth of Evangelicals or Protestants is as follows: “Figures from a 2007 survey showed that Muslims were 34% of the population, Ethiopian Orthodox 44% and Protestants 19%. The fastest-growing group is the Protestants, who grew from 14% to 19% between 1994 and 2007. Muslims have grown faster, however, in urban areas.”⁴ After the 2007 census the Protestants growth is more than double, particularly for the past five and six years its numerical growth is unpredictable.

Most of the evangelical Christians are migrated from the Orthodox religion, so that the leadership style and culture is driven from the country’s political and religious practices. It means the current new generations’ way of administration, government and church leadership is the outcome of these political and historical as well as religious experience. Once a leader is in the leadership position there is no way of replacing and developing the emerging leaders, the person thinks he will stay there for life.

The focus of this dissertation is to look at the Ethiopian Evangelical Churches in context on how to develop effective leadership transition from the old generation to the new generation based on God’s Kingdom and His principles.

1.2. Statement of Problem

Whenever some pastors and Christians from different nations and ethnic background were asked about this dissertation topic their response was automatically to say that it is their problem too. The problem and absence of effective leadership transition

4. https://www.mercatornet.com/demography/view/Will_Ethiopia_become_a_Muslim_majority_nation. (accessed November 20, 2017).

is global. In the Ethiopian evangelical churches, it is very crucial and urgent issue. Even if it seems there is numerical growth in the evangelical churches in Ethiopia, most of the Christians are not appreciating this growth and expansion, because the growth and relationships among leaders and believers is not Christ centered that there is not the love and unity, nor the reflection of the biblical character of the Church. Because of this it is full of hatred and conflict among the leaders. Key Issues and problems: 1) Most of the existing leaders of the evangelical churches in Ethiopia are not ready to prepare themselves for effective leadership transition to hand over the leadership when their time has ended. Thus the existing leaders are not embracing, preparing and equipping the emerging leaders for the next generation of leadership. 2) This unpreparedness makes the relationship between the existing and emerging leaders worse and full of conflict, hatred and division in God's churches. The mainline denominations leaders and the emerging churches leaders accuse each other publically. 3) Most of the emerging leaders are going out from their mother churches with conflict and begin their own church and prematurely make themselves leaders. After few years they enter to moral failure, teach heresies and misuse spiritual gifts. 4) Confusion and enmity among leaders, churches and believers among the evangelicals. The relationship between churches and leaders of existing and emerging churches are totally broken and, as a result when pastors or ministers preach at these new emerging churches these leaders accuse and complain. 5) The clear message of the gospel becomes distorted and the image of the church in the nation becomes deformed. There are strange practices and teachings in the new emerging churches done by those emerging leaders. Such experiences make the Ethiopian evangelical churches full of chaos and confusion in many ways.

This is all due to the crisis of leadership transition between the generations.

According to George Barna:

“Off all the leadership sin I have ever observed, nothing destroys morale more than the control freak. Leaders who major in control have the following traits: Think they alone, have all the answers; think they know best because they were there first; have ‘founderitis’ – they are unable to let go of their baby; delegate responsibilities without the authority to act; reverse decisions others were asked to make; keep colleagues in the dark about important decisions that affect them; won’t give others room to make their mark in the organization.”⁵

There is a huge misunderstanding and conflict between the new churches and the mainline denominations as well as the old and new generation’s leaders. The old generation church leaders are not preparing the next generation leaders to transfer their leadership responsibility effectively and peacefully.

On the other hand, the new generation leaders are not willing to submissively learn and discipline themselves by listening from their leaders and fathers. This is one of the complaints heard from the old generation leaders. They say the young generation is not patient and obedient to develop and mature their life and ministry. This creates severe animosity between the generations and destroys the image of the church in the society. The believers are also becoming confused about the gap between the existing and emerging leaders and the conflict between the leaders. Generally the emerging leaders going out and opening new churches and continue the ministry without the acknowledgment of the existing leaders. After months and years when problems and heresies happen because of their use of distorted teaching and unbiblical use of the spiritual gifts as well as their self-centered messages no one can correct them. For example, recently The Ethiopian Evangelical Churches Association and another large Evangelical denomination in the country excommunicated thirteen new emerging leaders

5. George Barna, *Leaders on Leadership: Wisdom, Advice and encouragement on the Art of Leading God’s people*. (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1997), 272.

and their ministry. Such action creates great confusion among the believers and churches on both sides. On the other side these new emerging leaders and their churches formed another association and respond by rejecting, denouncing and accusing the existing leadership of the Ethiopian Evangelical Churches Association. Due to the conflict and lack of communication as brothers and sisters in Christ, this is a time of crisis in the Ethiopian Evangelical Churches. As one researcher wrote:

Ministers we hire from outside ... tend to last five years or less. They run into cultural issues that they most often misplay. Both they and the people end up hurt. On the other hand, pastors that we hire from inside tend to last twenty to thirty years and longer. They know how to navigate the culture. They know where the boundaries are and just how far they can go without stirring up unmanageable conflict.... organizations that last over 100 years take ten to fifteen years to transition to new leaders.” He continued and said; “You're going to die, retire, quit or get fired. You'll not pastor your church forever.”⁶

So, to continue God’s work in a better and developing way for generations to come the existing leaders need to work hard for successful transitions.

In light of these serious issues, the Ethiopian church needs effective leadership transition between the old and new generations. The old generation leaders which are the existing leaders before and after the religious freedom in Ethiopia since 1991 need to know how to plan ahead to prepare the potential leaders just as Moses prepared Joshua, Jesus prepared the disciples and Paul prepared Timothy. On the other hand, the emerging leaders need to know how to learn from their predecessors and how to lead and continue God’s agenda when their time comes.

One of the emerging leaders and ministers’ problem is depending on their God-given spiritual gifts and ignoring any kind of advice and counseling from their predecessors. This leads them to have a proud and self-centered ministry because spiritual gifts without character leads to destruction, such as church splits and obscures

6. Andrew Fox. <http://www.crosswalk.com/pastors> and leaders, (accessed, March 16, 2018).

the good Christian testimony in the society. To solve these problems emerging leaders need to relate themselves with the existing leaders and work together for the effective leadership transition.

At this time, the biggest challenge for the Church in Ethiopia is the gap and conflict between the old and the new generations. This also leads into distorted teachings and splitting among local churches and believers in the country. The existing leaders and the emerging leaders generally have great misunderstanding and conflict. This creates great confusion among the Christians in the land.

There is no leadership accountability because everybody, particularly the emerging leaders, are leading and doing the ministry however they want. There is no foundational biblical standard which everyone can submit himself too. Also no one is willing to listen and correct as Paul intended to do after fourteen years of ministry; “Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and also took Titus with *me*. And I went up by revelation, and communicated to them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to those who were of reputation, lest by any means I might run, or had run, in vain.” Galatians 2:1-2.

As it was in the time of Judges everybody is doing whatever it pleases for himself. No one can stop what is going on in the churches. It brings heresies and false prophecies and practices in the church and because of this many are hurt and have been financially exploited.

As mentioned earlier besides the conflict and the confusion among the believers; false prophecies, false expectations, the prosperity gospels is increasingly dominating the evangelical believers. Thus, the image of the church and its message is totally distorted

and disliked in society. The biblical sound teachings and the standard of its doctrines are at risk. Now this issue has become the Government's Issue, because in the name of ministry and spiritual practices, many poor people are financially exploited in the name of healing and others have lost their lives after receiving false message of healing that encouraged them to stop taking their medication. These all are the effects of the absence of effective leadership transition.

Every new emerging leader becomes their own self-appointed leader because of that they are not willing to follow and listen and learn from others. It is a time of great chaos in the church in Ethiopia. It seems like revival but it is full of confusion, sorrow and sadness among the Christians in the country. There is no harmony and instead there is competition among the leaders.

If someone among the emerging leaders is under church discipline to correct his unbiblical and unethical doing, he just leaves from the existing church and opens another church by himself continues in his wrong doing. This has become the pattern in the Evangelical churches and many local churches are opened like this; because of this there are so many distortions of biblical teachings, practices and spiritual chaos in the Evangelical churches in Ethiopia.

One of the root causes for all these problems is the absence of effective leadership transitions between existing and emerging leaders. If it continues like this it is very dangerous and damaging as George Barna in his book said: "A poor transition can drain corporate energy and resources for years to come. Every ministry, regardless of its size or

purpose, must carefully plan and execute the transition of leadership. Without a smooth succession, lasting success cannot be achieved.”⁷

1.3. Statement of Purpose

1.3.1. Central research issues

The central research topic for this dissertation is to study the dynamics, obstacles, the positive and negative effects of transition, and the stages or phases of transition in the lives of emerging leaders and its impact for the successful leadership transition. The main issue facing the Ethiopian evangelical church leadership is a lack of a biblical model on leadership transition to prepare the existing leaders mind set which would give important guidelines how to effectively and successfully prepare the successors and implement the actual leadership transition in the church.

1.3.2. Aim of the dissertation

This is to provide biblical and practical guidelines to help the existing and emerging leaders to think and prepare themselves for effective leadership transition by planning ahead of time and working on it to have a well prepared and equipped successor to forward God’s kingdom with undistorted gospel message and image of Christ in the evangelical churches of Ethiopia.

Developing and practicing effective leadership transition will help to avoid the gap and conflict between generations and it is to help the existing leaders to plan ahead of

7. George Barna, *Leaders on Leadership: Wisdom, Advice and encouragement on the Art of Leading God’s people*. (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1997), 298.

time and prepare the potential leaders to hand over their God-given responsibility for the next God-called potential or emerging leaders by training, equipping, caring and blessing them. This is what God wants to do among His people. As we see the effective leadership transition examples in His Word it should be with preplanning for preparation, effectively working on it, applying peacefully and implementing without conflict and losing fundamentals.

The focus of this dissertation is to bring reconciliation and unity among churches, leaders and believers by avoiding the conflict created by the absence of effective leadership transition and its consequences among the Ethiopian evangelical churches and leaders in Ethiopia. Therefore, Christ's church will continue its impact in the nation in the coming generations. Tom Mullins in his book put the vitality of succession in successful leadership:

The true measure of success for a leader is measured by succession. Successfully handing off the leadership baton to a successor is essential if we want our organizations to thrive in the years following our own investment. It requires planning and the right timing to ensure a smooth and seamless handoff in the exchange zone. Inevitably, a handoff will need to be made! And the more prepared we are for the future, the less of a surprise it will be when it's time to make a change.⁸

1.3.3. Objectives of the dissertation

By doing these all the main purpose is to accomplish the following objectives:

- 1) To know and understand the reasons behind the failure in effective leadership transition within the evangelical churches in Ethiopia.
- 2) To address the issues affecting effective transition of leadership within the evangelical churches in Ethiopia.
- 3) To

8. Tom Mullins, *Passing the Leadership Baton: A winning transition plan for your ministry*. (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2015), 7.

evaluate and recommend from a biblical perspective, the way forward for effective leadership transition in the evangelical churches of Ethiopia.

In conclusion, the old generation or the existing leaders need to know and prepare themselves for there is a time they have to hand over their leadership task for others so that they have to prepare themselves ahead of time and to prepare the potential leaders.

On the other hand, for the emerging leaders it is to help to prepare themselves by learning and listening from their leaders and by being patient to God's timing and to comprehend charisma with character. Let God finish his shaping of the character of the emerging leaders by allowing and waiting Him. There are times many emerging leaders abort and jump from God's processing and shaping of emerging leaders character.

Developing effective leadership transition will help the leaders and the church to be fruitful and peaceful in ministry and full of blessing and joy among the leaders as well as the congregation. It also minimizes the conflict and misunderstanding of generations in the church and empowers and motivates the new leadership to invest their full potential on building God's kingdom rather than wasting their time and power in resolving conflicts. As Mullins said; "a transition will be one of the greatest tests of your leadership, but it will also serve as one of the greatest rewards and testimonies of your legacy. We leaders must prepare ourselves, our organizations, and our successors to receive the baton of leadership so that there are even greater days ahead."⁹

9. Tom Mullins, *Passing the Leadership Baton: A winning transition plan for your ministry*. (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2015), 19.

1.3.4. Research Questions

- 1) What are the causes/reasons for the failure of having an effective leadership transition in the evangelical churches of Ethiopia?
- 2) What are the issues affecting the effective leadership transition in the Ethiopian evangelical churches?
- 3) What needs to be done for effective leadership transition take place in the Ethiopian evangelical churches?

1.4. Research Methodology

The research method of this dissertation will be mainly qualitative methods. I will use different methods for this research: library research, personal face to face interviews, questionnaires, online information, authentic websites, seminars, conference papers and sermons and also active discussions with different leaders from the Ethiopian evangelical churches. I have identified and prepared the questionnaires to ask both the existing or old generation leaders and the emerging leaders how to develop guidelines for effective leadership transition, what the existing problems concerning church leadership transition and mainly what will be the solution to solve the problems in relation to having effective leadership transition in the church.

The interview will be by selecting pastors or leaders that can be good representatives of the Ethiopian evangelical churches leadership from the new and old generation pastors or leadership. The research will be done through face to face interview, through emails, and other social medias in both Amharic and English languages.

1.5. Assumptions

In this research, I have the following assumptions: 1) I assume the leaders I selected to answer my questions and questionnaires will represent the attitudes and views of the Ethiopian evangelical churches at large. 2) I also assume to minimize and smoothen the resistance of change from the old generation leaders and to avoid the complaints from the old generation leaders about the young generation's disobedient and unfaithful character.

1.6. Limitations of Study

Leadership is one of the fundamental topics in the Christian churches all over the world. Particularly the absence of effective leadership transition between the old and the new generation's leaders and its effect is everywhere. It is a global problem and challenge, but the focus of this dissertation is limited to the evangelical churches leaders/pastors in Ethiopia. Specifically, how to develop an effective leadership transition in a healthy way for the expansion and accomplishment of God's Kingdom mission in the country. Since the evangelical churches' leadership in Ethiopia need guidelines for effective leadership transition that can bring reconciliation and alignment between generations.

1.7. Definitions of Common Terms

Old generations/ Existing leaders – these two phrases are used interchangeably to indicate the church leadership before 1991 which are leaders before the regime change in Ethiopia.

Potential/Emerging/New generation leaders – these phrases are used interchangeably to indicate new church leaders comes after 1991.

Ethiopian Evangelical Churches – this is to indicate Christ's church in the old and new generations in Ethiopia.

Ethiopian Evangelical Churches Fellowship Association – this is to indicate the mainline denomination churches association in Ethiopia.

Pastors /leaders – these words are used interchangeably to indicate the church leadership.

Charisma – giftedness, spiritual gifts.

Servant leadership – this phrase is used to indicate the biblical kind of leadership.

Predecessor – this word is used to indicate the old generation or existing leaders.

Successor – this word is used to indicate the emerging or potential leaders of the new coming leaders.

Leadership Transition – these phrase is used to indicate the transferring of leadership responsibility between different time leaders.

Finally, the Bible quotes used in this dissertation are from the New King James Version; unless noted.

Chapter 2

Literature Review on Leadership Transition and Its Practicality in the Evangelical Churches of Ethiopia

The leadership and its transition from one leadership to the next is always obvious in any church and organization. There are books which are written directly or indirectly in relation to this topic. In this chapter the reflection of the books as well as the practicality of leadership transition in the Ethiopian evangelical churches is discussed in the mirror of the books.

2.1. Introduction to Leadership Transition

In most places as well as in people's mind, leadership is one of the topics that's always discussed and is even addressed in many studies as well as trainings. In the twenty first century leadership is one of the most popular topic in seminaries and different training institutions. A nationally recognized expert on leadership issues said this in his book:

Though various books on Christian leadership appeared not much has changed in church organizations. Today some experts argue that the problem is a general lack of people with leadership ability-we just don't have as many leaders as we used to. Our experience as church trainers and consultants, as well as Aubrey's involvement in seminary education over the past twenty years, has shown us that we have many potential leaders, but we're not developing them. And it's this failure in development that has precipitated the leadership crisis in our world in general and the church in particular. Our leaders don't know how to train other leaders.¹⁰

Unless the church and the leaders develop the potential leaders, it is hard to have effective leadership transition.

10. Aubrey Malphurs and Will Mancini, *Building Leaders: Blueprints for developing leadership at every level of your church*. (Grand Rapids, Bakers Books, 2004), 10.

According to the studies and books written on this subject; even though it is becoming more popular in studying its theoretical principles and rules, practically it is one of the very important subject and task that needs to work hard for the application. As Bolman wrote, “Though leadership is universally accepted as a cure for all organizational ills, it is also widely misunderstood. Many views of leadership fail to recognize its relational and contextual nature and its distinction from power and position.”¹¹

On the other hand, even though there is understanding of the need of leadership development in the churches, as Malphurs said “Though many churches have awakened to the need to develop godly, competent leadership are talking about it, few are doing anything about it.”¹² In my opinion, the leadership transition from generation to generation or from predecessors to successors in most cases of leadership experiences is full of conflict and misunderstanding. Transitions in high-performing organizations and churches present a special set of problems because those organizations have qualities worth preserving, results that need to be sustained, and relationships that need to be kept unbroken. The risk of losing ground is a problematic aspect of transition in such settings. As one of the writers said:

Transition of top-level leadership can present numerous challenges to churches and organizations. In the first decade of the 21st century, the challenges are more acute than at any time in the recent past. The retirement of the old generation, increased demand for accountability and performance of organizations, and the speed and complexity of technological change - these factors only heighten those challenges.¹³

Even if the challenge of leadership transition is a global challenge, for me it

11. Lee G. Bolman & Terrence E. Deal, *Reframing Organizations: Artistry, Choice and Leadership*. (San Francisco, CA, Jossey-Bass, 2003), 365.

12. *Ibid.*, 11.

13. Joseph Christy [https://www.td.org/Successful Leadership Transition](https://www.td.org/Successful-Leadership-Transition): (accessed, January 23, 2018).

is more crucial in the Ethiopian evangelical churches at this time. The failed leadership transition causes severe damage in spreading the gospel and reach Ethiopians for Christ.

So how can as healthy church prepare for transitions in ways that preserve their best qualities in the Ethiopian evangelical churches? How can they promote stability and, at the same time, promote improved levels of Christian character and mission performance? And how can they balance the uncertainties of change with church leaders and members need for unity, direction, and effective leadership transition satisfaction? To address and answer these basic questions acknowledging and addressing both the difficulties and opportunities to develop effective leadership transitions among top leaders is very important. Transition need not be painful. If thoughtfully planned and implemented, it can preserve the best of what is in place and open a path to unexpected accomplishments in God's kingdom. If leadership transition and change is not welcomed by the existing churches and leaders the outcome will be hindrance to the growth of the church or the organization.

2.1.1. Political and Secular Practices on Leadership Transition

Nowadays in some ways leadership has become an instrument to satisfy self-ego and it is used for personal benefits. Because of that once a person got the position of leadership he or she is all in all over others. As Jesus said; "You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. (Mark 10:42)." The reason why Jesus said this was because of the hunger and question of James and John on leadership position. He answered it is being like Gentiles, which means secular or worldly way of leadership. They campaign for it,

they fight and kill others for it, some time they die for it, not to serve others just to get the position and the name behind it.

After getting the leadership position, for most of these kinds of leaders, to think about effective and peaceful leadership transition and working on it is unthinkable. With such attitude leadership transition remains just an ideal and a dream. This kind of practices makes the leadership transition problematic and sometimes destroys the predecessor's legacy, while creating a great challenge for the successor and the image of the country or the organization.

In addition to this the other extreme in leadership transition is the transition between the family members and friends. For long time in history as well as in our time mostly the leadership transitions were occurring between families, friends and among those who know each other. When the father died the son or daughter will continue in the position. Particularly it is a common practice in the developing countries including Ethiopia.

This kind of tradition in leadership transition has its own negative impact in developing effective leadership transition between generations unless and otherwise doing it intentionally and with preparation. As Rothwell stated "Competency identification and values clarification are increasingly important foundations for an effective succession planning and management."¹⁴ Just because he/she is the family members of the leaders and putting in the leadership position without having competency doesn't help the organization or the church to grow and continue with its increased performance.

14. William J. Rothwell, *Effective Succession Planning: Ensuring Leadership Continuity and Talent from Within*. (New York: Amacom, 2010), 82.

2.1.2. Leadership Transition in developed and developing countries

Even if there are many challenges in leadership transition all over the world; when we compare between developed and developing countries the challenge in developed and civilized countries is way less than the developing ones. For example, when the presidential election happened in America in 2016 most of the people were not happy about the nomination of Donald Trump including the then president Barack Obama; but after Trump won the election, president Obama was ready to transfer the leadership to Trump without conflict and chaos and he did it. According to TIME magazine:

“When President Barack Obama met with President-elect Donald Trump for the first time at the White House on Thursday, the meeting was billed as part of Obama’s promise to ensure a “smooth” transition of power the way George W. Bush did for him. As he said in the Rose Garden on Wednesday, “The peaceful transition of power is one of the hallmarks of our democracy.”¹⁵

On the other hand, in developing countries including my own country, Ethiopia, even if the opposition party wins the election the existing authorities are not willing to hand over the leadership peacefully. For example, in 2005 there was a democratic election in Ethiopia where the ruling party presumably lost, however; they overturned the result by cheating and using the power and influence that they have. It was later announced that the ruling party had gotten 99% of the votes and won the election.

15. Olivia B. Waxman. <http://www.time.com> Barack Obama, Donald Trump and the Difficult History of Presidential Transition. November 11, 2016, (accessed, February 20, 2018).

Because they have absolute power the ruling party took most of the opposition party leaders to jail. In the process many people lost their lives.

It is a repeated action in developing countries. As one African writer mentioned: “Although young people can be, and are, voted into office in each election, the attractions of incumbency and the undesirability of leaving office are such that many in the older generation are reluctant to relinquish power. At the same time, younger generations chafe at not being able to take their turn. This is a pattern we see repeated in many countries in Africa.”¹⁶

All these experiences and practices make it hard to have effective leadership transition between generations as well as between predecessors and successors. It is still a cancer and kind of transmitted disease in many parts of Africa. All these contributes negatively in an effective leadership transition in the Ethiopian context.

2.2. The Practice of Leadership Transition in Ethiopia

2.2.1. Its Political and Religious practice

Ethiopia is one of the ancient countries in Africa which is located in East or horn of Africa. As other countries, particularly undeveloped countries, leadership transition in Ethiopia is full of conflict and bloodshed. I want to put some details on its cultural, religious and political practices in connection with leadership transition.

As I mentioned above Ethiopia has long history as a country its cultural and religious structure is more of hierarchical. Even though Jewish culture and New

16. Wangari Maathai, *The Challenge for Africa*. (New York, Pantheon Books, 2009), 121.

Testament Christianity have long story in the country, the people group in different parts of the country were administered by local chiefs and rulers for long period of time before that. As a Coptic Orthodox dominant country, the church is led by the pope and once the pope gets into the position he stays there until he dies.

Not only this, as a government for long period of time the country was led by the kings and the kings were appointed by the popes. Likewise, once the kings came to the leadership position they stayed on the position for life. This is the culture and the attitude developed in the society as a country. If the people wants a leadership change and transition it is always with conflict and bloodshed. For that matter because of this mind set the existing leaders never thought for developing emerging leaders and preparing for effective leadership transition.

The influence of the Western culture and the expansion of globalization creates the awareness of comparative freedom and democracy that brings impacts in the society. Because in this modern era freedom as well as democracy become the norm in the developed countries. For Ethiopians, the leadership shift from the old system and trend to its new form become a challenge for the old generation. Always once somebody enrolled in leadership it is static and stayed for life. There is no systems and awareness to replace and develop other emerging leaders before leaving the position or office. The current political leadership came to power twenty-six years ago with coup and bloodshed; even if there is opposition everywhere for seeking change and peaceful leadership transition, the regime is not willing and ready to transfer and share power and replace the leadership for the betterment of the country. It is unfortunate, because of the dictatorial nature of the regime many people are dying and suffering for lack of effective leadership transition.

Both politics and religion or the state and the church, Orthodox Church, have interconnected and related in the leadership and administration. The church's pope is the one who appointed the king and vice versa; and also, the church has one third of the authority in the leadership. As one Ethiopian historian wrote:

According to the available historical records, Christianity in Ethiopia was introduced first to the royal court and then The Orthodox Church in Ethiopia gradually spread among the common people. Since then, church and state have remained so intermixed that it is not easy to draw a line between them. The Emperor behaved as though the church were the temporal as well as the religious authority of the country. Just as his temporal orders were executed by his ministers and generals, so were his religious orders executed by the church. In practice, he was both Pope and King.¹⁷

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church and the Ethiopian government relationship was like two sides of one coin. So, its leadership style was more or less similar until the military coup occurred in the government in 1974. After that The Ethiopian government leadership transition was with bloodshed and great chaos. After seventeen years of communist regime, in 1991 another revolution happened and the communist regime was overthrown. Whenever the ruler changed, the political leaders assigned their supporter priest in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. This is the tradition of the political and religious leadership transition in the country. The country never has experienced effective leadership transition in history. This is the culture and the practice of the society in relation with leadership transition.

17. Haile Larebo. <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi>. Journal, Religion in Communist Lands: The Orthodox Church and the state in the Ethiopian revolution, Volume 14 – Issue 2, Published online: 02 Jan 2008), 149.

2.2.2. The practice of Leadership Transition in the Ethiopian Evangelical Churches

The challenge of leadership transition in Ethiopia is not only for the political leaders and its traditional religion, it is also a current Evangelical churches' problem; because these church leaders came from such kind of authoritative and dictatorial societal system.

When we see most of the church leaders after they accepted Christ and become Christians their old mentality and system still influences them so the way the leaders are exercising their leadership responsibility is a direct reflection of their cultural and religious background. As Blackaby in his book said; "Is Christian leadership the same thing as secular leadership? ... The trend among many Christian leaders has been for an almost indiscriminate and uncritical acceptance of secular leadership theory without measuring it against the timeless precepts of Scripture."¹⁸

Even if Leadership is a wide topic and it is not my prior focus to go in detail about it, if its spiritual and biblical base missed applying the leadership transition effectively obviously will miss the point. As Russell and Bucher wrote "the ingredient most missing in churches today is a plan of succession."¹⁹ Because of the churches lack the biblical and spiritual guidelines for leadership as well as its transition the church is experiencing conflicts and related problems in Ethiopia. The culture and the developed attitude in generations has a negative impact in the development and practicing of biblical effective leadership transition in the church.

18. Henry & Richard Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership: Moving people on to God's agenda.* (Nashville, TN. Broadman & Holman Pub., 2001), 9-10.

19. Bob Russell and Bryan Bucher, *Transition Plan* (Louisville, KY: Ministers Label Publishing, 2010), 18.

Leadership development and effective leadership transition has a new urgency in the Evangelical Churches of Ethiopia, both in terms of helping current leaders meet the demands of the biblical servant leadership and equipping the emerging leaders to assume crucial responsibilities and to apply the biblical principles of effective leadership transition.

After all, if we're doing pastoral ministry and effective spiritual leadership right, we should set up the next leader or pastor for an even greater level of ministry success than we had. Instead, leadership transition is one of the most dangerous moments in the life of most churches. And the longer and more successful the leadership, the harder it tends to be when they leave. As pastors, we should do everything we can to make it as easy as possible for the next pastor and the church to do great ministry after we leave.

2.3. Effective Leadership Transition

2.3.1. What is Effective Leadership Transition?

To define effective leadership transition, we must first look at the phrase which is a combination of three very important words. According to this dissertation these words are defined as follows: The first word is *effective*, which is define as “adequate to accomplish a purpose; producing the intended or expected result”²⁰; *Leadership*, which means guiding people towards God’s purpose, and *Transition*, it has wider meaning and implications; the first literal meaning is it is a “movement, passage, or change from one position, state, stage, subject, concept, etc., to another change.”²¹ To understand its wider

20. <http://www.Dictionary.com>

21. Ibid.

meaning I want to put its meaning according to William Bridges “Transition is based on a theory of personal development that views transition as the natural process of disorientation and reorientation marking the turning points in the path of growth.”²² To understand the wider meaning of transition it is better to look at the two aspects of it:

2.3.1.1. Transition in personal development

The personal development transition in the life of an emerging leader is the foundation of effective leadership transition to the leadership task. According to Bridges²³ explanation concerning transition, it is a three-phase process that people go through as they internalize and come to terms with the details of the new situation that the change brings about. Transition is a process by which people unplug from an old world and plug into a new world, we can say that transition begins with an ending and finishes with a beginning.

Bridges also continued by explaining the distinction between transition and change by elaborating transition is not the other term of change. Several important differences between change and transition are overlooked when people think of transition as simply gradual or unfinished change or when they use change and transition interchangeably. With a change, you naturally focus on the outcome that the change produces, on the other hand the starting point for dealing with transition is not the outcome but the ending that you will have to make to leave the old situation behind. Situational change hinges on the new thing, but psychological transition depends on letting go of the old reality and the old identity you had before the change took place. The

22. William Bridges, *Transitions, Making sense of life's changes*. (Philadelphia, Da Capo Press, 2004), 4.

23. Bridges, *Transitions and Making Transitions*.

starting point for dealing with transition is not the outcome but the ending that you will have to make to leave the old situation behind.

All transitions are composed of three phases: the three natural phases of transition are Endings, The Neutral Zone, and The New Beginning. Before looking at the three phases of transition I want to express how the concept of transition explained by the author is very important and useful for the development of spiritual life as well as leadership in the Ethiopian context. Because it is one of the most misunderstood and aborted subject in the Christian community, particularly in the leadership circle.

Mostly when we are thinking of the transition we are focusing on the transition of tasks, which is the leadership positions, not on the transition of internal development of the person itself. So the principles and transition phases mentioned and widely discussed by the author are very practical and applicable for the genuine and healthy growth of the person's life in the process of transition. This transition is natural and happening in every persons' who are in every stage of development. Particularly it is vital in the life of leaders to develop and change the characters with the genuine transition.

1) Ending - Transition starts with an ending. At times of inner transition people need to be separated from their familiar places in the social order. Transition will begin with an ending, and the ending will begin with disengagement. After that the dismantling which is the old habits and behaviors and practices that made you feel like you can only be dismantled. They have to be taken apart a piece at a time.

Then misidentification continues - by breaking your old connections to the world and taking apart the internal structures required by those connections, you also lose your old ways of defining yourself. It is the removal of the old identities signs and the temporary assumption of a non-identity. Another aspect mentioned by the author is the

disenchantment, which is by separated from the old identity and the old situation or some important aspect of it, a person floats free in a kind of limbo between two worlds. Many significant transitions not only involve disenchantment, they began with it. The lesson of disenchantment begins with the discovery that if you want to change - really to change, and not just change to switch positions - you must realize that some significant part of your old reality was in your head, not out there. The point that disenchantment, whether it is a minor disappointment or a major shock, is the signal that things are moving into transition.

The disenchantment experience is the signal that the time has come to look below the surface of what you thought to be so. It is the sign that you are ready to see and understand more now. Disorientation - it is loss of motive, power and direction and the reality that is left behind in all thing and it makes to suffer, because it is the way. Disorientation affects not only our sense of space but also our sense of time. The problem is that before we can find something new, we must deal with a time of nothingness.

One of the most important differences between a change and a transition is that changes are driven to reach a goal, but transitions start with letting go of what no longer fits or is adequate to the life stage you are in. The transition itself begins with letting go of something that you have believed or assumed, some way you have always been or seen yourself as, some outlook on the world or attitude toward others.

Only disengagement refers exclusively to external things. Dismantling can be either an internal or an external process, and misidentification, disenchantment and disorientation all refers to internal things. The inner endings are what initiates the transition. Change can lead to transition; but transition can also lead to change. For it is

only in the context of the transition process that endings hold personal meaning and open the gate to our own transformation. What we call the beginning is often the end; and to make an end is to make a beginning. The end is where we start from.

In my opinion in Ethiopian context transition is one of the subjects mostly misunderstood and misused and sometimes aborted. We just focus on the beginning and we never realize and understand starting from the end. Practically it is there and in every one of us, but we are not taking care of the transition as it should be. Especially the ending of the old is very important before the new begin. As Jesus said the new wine needs to be in the new wine skin.

2) The Neutral Zone - this is the time between dreams in which fundamental chaos of the world's beginning welled up and eliminated all forms. It is a place without name - an empty space in the world and the lifetime where a new sense of self could begin. It is apparently empty in-between time when, under the surface of the organizational situation or invisibly inside you, the transformation is going on. Everything feels as though it is up for grabs and you don't quite know who you are or how you are supposed to behave, so this feels like a meaningless time. It also makes no sense of the feeling of lost ness that we are likely to experience, nor of the feeling that emptiness seems to stretch on forever. For many people, the experience of the neutral zone is essentially one of emptiness in which the old reality looks transparent and nothing feels solid anymore.

But it is actually a very important time. During your time in the neutral zone, you are receiving signals and clues as to what you need to become for the next stage of your life. And, unless you disrupt it by trying to rush through the neutral zone quickly, you are

slowly being transformed into the person you need to be to move forward in your life. That is where real internal transition is taken place.

The first of the neutral zone activities or functions is surrender - one must give in to the emptiness and stop struggling to escape it. Why is emptiness essential in the neutral zone? There are three main reasons for the emptiness between the old life and the new. First, the process of transformation is essentially a death and rebirth process rather than one of mechanical modification. The second reason is that the process of disintegration and reintegration is the source of renewal. The last reason is the perspective it provides on the stages themselves.

Understanding what the neutral zone is and why it is there can keep you from falling in to one of the two snares that people-especially people who are upset with and anxious about the transition they are in - fall into when they are in the neutral zone. As does any unfolding natural process, the neutral zone takes its own sweet time. Speeding things up, hitting the fast forward button, is a tempting idea, but that only stirs things up in ways that disrupts the natural formative processes that is happening. Far from bringing you out of the neutral zone sooner, such tactics usually set you back and force you to start again.

It is important in times of transition to reflect on the past from the perspective of a new present, as the past will likely look different. The neutral zone - the time between the old life and the new - is a particularly rich time for such insight. The neutral zone is a time when the real business of transition takes place. It is a time when we are making the all-but-imperceptible shift from one season of life to the next. It is in the neutral zone that

the real work of transformation takes place. The order of transition is ending, then neutral zone, then new beginning.

In my view, there is always a temptation in accepting the neutral zone in human nature; so that it is one of the crucial challenge in the process of transition. Most of the time the individuals want to escape and fasten the duration of the neutral zone. That makes the development in the leader's life and character to be aborted and continue in confusion. Because neutral zone doesn't finish its work to avoid the old nature and develop the new before the new beginnings. So it is very crucial phase for the development of leadership character and to have effective leadership transition as well.

3) The New Beginning - we come to beginnings only at the end. It is when the endings and the time of neutrality are finished that we can launch ourselves anew, changed and renewed by the deconstruction of the structures and outlooks of the old life phase and the subsequent journey through neutral zone.

Genuine beginnings depend upon the kind of inner realignment rather than on external shifts, for it is when we are aligned with deep longings that we become powerfully motivated. To identify the real new beginning there is indications which comes from the transition process itself. Is it really moved through endings into the neutral zone and found there the beginning you now want to follow, or is this beginning a way of avoiding and ending or aborting the neutral zone experience. Genuine beginnings begin within us, even when they are brought to our attention by external opportunities. It is out of the formlessness of the neutral zone that new form emerges and out of the emptiness of the fallow time that new life springs.

We can support and even enhance the process, but we cannot produce the results. Take things step by step and resist the alert song that sings about some other route where everything goes smoothly and events are always exciting and meaningful. Endings and beginnings, with emptiness in between. That basic shape is so essential to growth that we must learn to recognize it in our lives.

Endings-neutral zone -new beginning. We need all three phases, and in that order, for a transition to work. The phases don't happen separately, they often go on at the same time. Endings are going on in one place, in new beginning is already palpable. These are the three processes that the transition cannot be completed until all three phases taken place.²⁴

In addition, Clinton stated the Inner life growth of a leader in his book titled *The Making of a Leader*.²⁵ According to his description there are five leadership development phases and for some or few there is a sixth phase: Sovereign Foundations (Phase I) – God providentially works through family, environment, and historical events. This begins at birth. In this phase God is developing the leader by laying foundations in his life. God's work on the potential leaders to surrender and commit his whole life for the purpose of God in his future including identifying the call and gift. This operation is sovereign. The person's primary lesson is to learn to respond positively and take advantage of what God has laid in these foundations.

Inner Life Growth (Phase II) – God's development in the inner life and heart of the potential leader through formal and informal training. The focus is the person's heart.

24. Ibid.

25. J. Robert Clinton, *The Making of A Leader: Recognizing the lessons and stages of leadership development* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1998).

In this stage, God uses different activities for integrity check. A successful integrity check results in a stronger leader able to serve God in a wider sphere of influence. In this phase the potential leader seeks to know God in a more personal, intimate way. The leader learns the importance of praying and hearing God. As he grows in discernment, understanding, and obedience, he is put to the test. These early tests are crucial experiences that God uses to prepare the leader for the next steps in leadership. In this phase, leadership potential is identified and God uses testing experiences to develop character for an effective leadership responsibility.

A proper godly response allows a leader to learn the fundamental lessons God wants to teach and will result in an expanding ministry greater responsibility. If the person doesn't learn, he will usually be tested again in the same areas. In this phase there are three checks to test the character of the potential leader: integrity checks, obedience checks, and word checks.

The God-given capacity to lead has two parts: giftedness and character. Integrity is the heart of character. An emerging leader becomes aware of the importance of integrity through integrity checks. An integrity check is a test that God uses to evaluate intentions in order to shape character. This check is a springboard to an expanded sphere of influence. There are three parts to an integrity check: the challenge to consistency with inner convictions, the response to the challenge, and the resulting expansion of ministry.

A leader must learn obedience in order to influence others toward obedience. An obedience check is a process item through which a leader learns to recognize, understand, and obey God's voice. The leader encounters this early in his development and repeatedly throughout life. Through it God tests a leader's personal response to revealed truth.

Matured and developing leaders display love for truth. A word check is the process item that tests a leader's ability to understand or receive a word from God personally and then allow to work it out in his or her life. When successfully passed, a word check will lead to more truth. Word checks are frequently combined with integrity checks and obedience checks, because the revealed truth will test integrity or obedience. God teaches a leader to appreciate truth, cultivates habits for the intake of truth, and respond in obedience to truth, so he or she may be quick to discern God's truth in everyday life and through other people's ministry.

God uses His Word in a variety of ways: to give inner conviction, to assign ministry, to solve problems, to motivate toward vision, to encourage faith, to give divine assurance and to clarify guidance. Leadership gifts primarily involve word gifts, which initially emerge through word checks.

A godly leader is a person with God-given capacity and God-given responsibility to influence specific groups of God's people toward His purposes for the group.

Inner-life growth testing focuses on developing capacity and responsibility in a leader. Character is foundational if a leader is to influence people for God's purposes.

Ministry Maturing (Phase III) – the emerging leader gets into ministry. The focus is ministry. Most people are anxious to bypass Phase II and get on with real thing Phase III, ministry. He is beginning to experiment with spiritual gifts to reaches out others. Many of his lessons will zero in on relationships with other people or on the inadequacies in his personal life. Through ministry the leader can identify his gifts and skills and use them with increasing effectiveness. In Phases I, II, and III ministry activity or fruitfulness is not the focus; God is working primarily in the leader. Potential leaders are focusing on

the ministry and constantly evaluating productivity and activity, while God is quietly evaluating their leadership potential. He wants to teach us that we minister out of what we are. The major work is that which God is doing to and in the leader, not through him or her. God will teach us one thing, perhaps in a thousand ways: “I am forming Christ in you” it is this that will give power to your ministry.

Faithfulness is the standard by which God measures ministry maturity. A leader’s good response lead to new experience and additional skills. This ministry phase has four stages: entry, training, relational learning and discernment stages. In the entry stage there are two ministry process items: the ministry task and ministry challenge. A ministry task is an assignment from God that tests a person’s faithfulness and obedience to use his or her gifts in a task that has a beginning and ending, accountability, and evaluation. A desire to please the Lord in a ministry task is a sign of maturity. The leader’s accountability is to God. A ministry task is a test; it will test the potential leader’s availability, faithfulness, and skills. As the leader responds to them properly, God gives him tasks of greater and greater responsibility.

A ministry challenge focuses on the leader’s acceptance of his ministry. The heart of the ministry challenge is twofold: sensing God’s direction and the joy of discovering what it means to be a channel through whom God works. Ministry challenge describes the means whereby a leader is inspired to sense God’s guidance and to accept a new assignment.

A leader is one who influence a specific group of people to move in a God’s given direction. In order to influence and motivate people, a leader must learn how to relate people effectively. Ministry conflict processing is to the Ministry Maturing phase what

integrity processing is to the Inner-Life Growth phase. Ministry conflict, like general conflict, tests a leader's personal maturity. What we truly are is revealed in a crisis.

Leaders in the Ministry Maturing phase must learn to submit to authority in order to learn how to use authority properly. God uses conflict for His purposes in a leader's ministry as well as in his personal life.

The spiritual warfare process item refers to those instances in ministry where the leader discerns that ministry conflict is primarily supernatural in its source and essence. He depends on God's power to solve the problem in such a way that his leadership capacity, particularly his spiritual authority, is demonstrated and expanded. Physical situations may well be caused, controlled, or initiated by spiritual beings. Don't underestimate and don't overestimate the spiritual warfare behind every situation.

When a leader has potential for leadership, which is not yet developed or used, God will challenge that leader to take steps to develop and use that capacity for His purposes. At the heart of leadership is communication between God and the leader. A leader must know God's purposes for a group before he can communicate them. Prayer is a necessary leadership habit that enhances communication with God and secures vision for ministry. The call to a ministry from God is the call to pray for that ministry. We see in Scripture that Christ responds to the prayer challenge before major decisions or crises in His ministry.

Leaders are people with God-given vision, and one of their essential functions is to inspire followers with that vision and hope. This is done by faith. Faith challenges are directly linked to effective ministry. A faith challenge involves three elements: a revelation from God concerning some future plan, a realization by the leader that God is

challenging him to act on the basis of this revelation, and a mindset that determines to make leadership decisions based on this firm conviction. Ministry affirmation serves as encouragement, but it can also serve as confirmation of God's guidance. Quite often divine affirmation comes when a leader seeks God in a time of isolation with fasting and prayer.

Life Maturing (Phase IV) – during this phase the leaders identifies and uses his or her gift-mix with power. There is mature fruitfulness. God is working through the leader using imitation modeling like Jesus. God uses one's life as well as gifts to influence others. The leader's experiential understanding of God is being developed. Communion with God becomes foundational and it is more important than success in ministry. This is the base for lasting and effective ministry.

God doesn't stop working on character after moving someone into leadership. God continues to form character throughout the ministry of a leader. Mature ministry flows from a mature character, formed in the graduate school of life. A leader doesn't seek a spiritual authority; a leader seeks to know God. Maturity processing enhances this desire to know God. Spiritual authority results from a leader's experience with God.

Effective leaders, at all levels of leadership, maintain a learning posture throughout life. Effective leaders who are productive over a lifetime have three major factors: Bible based personal gifts, and situational dynamics. A Christian leader bases values, methodology, motivation, and goals on what God has revealed in Scripture. The Bible is the standard for evaluation of a Christian leader.

Convergence (Phase V) – the leader is moved by God into a role that matches gift-mix, experience, temperament. In convergence, being and spiritual authority form the

true power base for mature ministry. The leader uses the best he has to offer and is freed from ministry for which he is not gifted or suited. Life Maturing and Ministry Maturing peak together during this period. In this stage the leader's potential is maximized. The major developmental task for Phase V is the guidance of the leader into a role and place where he can have maximum effectiveness.

Afterglow or Celebration (Phase VI) - There are very few in this stage; it is the fruit of a lifetime of ministry and growth culminates in an era of recognition and indirect influence at broad levels. Others will seek them out because of their consistent track record in following God. Their storehouse of wisdom gathered over a lifetime of leadership will continue to bless and benefit many. In this stage there is no recognizable developmental task other than to allow a lifetime of ministry to reflect the glory of God and to honor His faithfulness over a lifetime of development.

These developmental stages are very important for the inner development of a leader in all levels of leadership position or task. Passing through those phases and stages will prepare the leaders to have a character intended by God and to accomplish His will as a leader.

Bridges and Clinton exhaustively discussed the issue of transition in their own ways. Both of them dealt the same issue in different ways; the bridges approach is more of psychological and personal development in every person's life. His explanation indicates transition is inevitable for every person and needs to be understood and handled well for an effective personal development. If not it can be aborted and be ineffective.

On the other hand, Clinton's explanation is more of on the development of Christians, particularly the development of leaders in their character and spiritual

maturity towards being a mature and model leader. According to Clinton the different stages of maturity levels mentioned in the book are different levels of a Christian leader who is growing or transitioning to be a leader.

Both Bridges and Clinton have similarities in their explanation of transition; because both of them focused and discussed the transition as an inner development in a person's life. The transition is focused on the person's personal life.

The application of these different leadership developmental phases is essential and vital in Ethiopia. In many ways the transitions between phases are not healthy and consciously understood and practiced. One of the fundamental problem is lack of training and understanding of the leadership concepts.

Even if it seems global problem, raising the emerging leaders by preparing, coaching and letting them exercise their God-given leadership gift and skill is a very challenging problem in the existing leadership. So by selecting and looking at the potential leaders to prepare and follow up to grow in each leadership development stages will help the making of leaders for the fulfillment of God's calling in the life and ministry of a leaders.

Mostly the church leaders in Ethiopia do not have a formal training. The ministry call and experience in the field including the fruits that give some form of affirmation, assuring the leader that God will continue to use him or her in the future. It is absolutely true in my life. I went to Bible College after thirteen years of full time ministry. After that I got the confirmation and assurance of God's gift working in me. All leaders are constantly being trained by God, but not all of them learn from the training. Formal intensive training can be helpful, but is not essential to leadership.

In my opinion, plenty of the leaders in Ethiopian churches have received a call and a gift of leadership from the Holy Spirit and assume they don't need training and coaching. Even if they are gifted as Clinton stated in the book:

The fruit of the Spirit is the mark of the mature Christian. The gifts of the Spirit are a mark of a leader being used of God. God wants the balance. His approach is to work in you, and then through you. His goal is a Spirit-filled leader through whom the living Christ ministers, utilizing the leader's spiritual gifts." I am here by God's appointment, in His keeping, under His training, and for His time. Process items develop potential, confirm the leadership role, and move the emerging leader along to God's appointed ministry level.²⁶

Finally, I want to conclude this part with Terry's explanation about the personal development of a person as Christian or follower of Christ:

A transition is an in-between period in the life development of a Christ-follower. In a transition, individuals consolidate past learning, process issues of character, deepen convictions and values, and are prepared for the next phase of their development. Transitions bring closure to the past in order to move forward to the next stage of personal development. Transitions are characterized by a prolonged period of restlessness, self-doubt, lack of motivation, stagnation, diminished confidence, lack of direction, distance from God, isolation, relational conflict and tension, lack of effectiveness, and struggle to stay focused and motivated.²⁷

2.3.1.2. Transition in leadership task

As the Bible says in Proverb 16:32, "*He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.*" A person who is allowing God to fulfil the process of the transition from the inside his life is easy to be effective in the leadership task.

According to Clinton there are different boundaries in transition, leaders can transition from one ministry assignment to another, from one ministry to another or from one phase of their life to another; according to his description the boundary processing times provides unique opportunity for the leaders. such as to bring closure to recent

26.J. Robert Clinton, *The Making of A Leader: Recognizing the lessons and stages of leadership development* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1998),33.

27. Terry B. Walling, *Stuck: navigating the transitions of life & leadership* (Chico: Biblical, Inc. 2015), 26.

experiences, to deepen ones relationship to God, to expand one's perspectives to see new things, and to make decisions which will launch one into a new phase of development.²⁸

Once the person's internal life transition process is handled properly and done effectively the transition of the emerging leader to the leadership task will follow. Meanwhile, during the boundary processing times the emerging leader can benefit to identify important shaping activities and these boundary times and boundary processing play a significant role in the focus variable associated with ministry philosophy development.²⁹

Without the successful internal transition, there is no effective leadership transition. Therefore, without the personal development transition in the life of an emerging leader it is hard for the application of an effective leadership transition to the leadership task. So that, effective leadership transition, which is the successful transferring of leadership task or position from one generation or predecessor to the next generation or successor will be done with the qualities and values of the church in an effective and peaceful way.

According to Meredith Edward's explanation:

The leadership transition is a transitional process of leadership position from an existing or senior leader to the successor or emerging leader. A Senior leader succession refers to a dynamic transitional process that organizations experienced in which a senior leader known as the predecessor (in many cases a CEO) steps down from a primary position of influence and authority and is succeeded by another individual known as the successor."³⁰

28. Clinton, J. Robert, *Boundary Processing: Looking at Critical Transition Times in Leader's Lives*. (CA., Altadena, Barnabas Publishers, 1992), 2.

29. *Ibid.*, 12.

30. Wheeler, Meredith Edward, Ph.D. <https://pqdtopen.proquest.com: The leadership succession process in megachurches / Temple University, 2008. 20>.

So, my focus in this dissertation concerning transition is to discuss about the transition of the leader's life and the transition of leadership task or position from predecessors to successors or from the old generation leaders to the emerging leaders effectively in the context of the Ethiopian Church. In the following sections I will go in detail about effective leadership transition. Because God's mission and the task of church leadership needs to continue from generation to generation. Mullins wrote;

The true measure of success for a leader is measured by succession. Successfully handing off the leadership baton to a successor is essential if we want our organizations to thrive in the years following our own investment. It requires planning and the right timing to ensure a smooth and seamless handoff in the exchange zone. Inevitably, a handoff will need to be made! And the more prepared we are for the future, the less of a surprise it will be when it's time to make a change.³¹

Every leader and every church needs to embrace transition planning because it's best for the life of the outgoing leader, the success of the successor, and the future of the church. Having effective leadership transition is vital for the continued health and growth of the church. Without effective leadership transition, we cannot keep the values and qualities of the church ministry as well as expect the development and growth of the church in the generations to come.

2.3.2. The Need of Effective Leadership Transition in the Evangelical churches of Ethiopia

A transition is one of the greatest tests of a spiritual leaders, but it will also serve as one of the greatest rewards and testimonies of the leaders' legacy. Leaders must prepare themselves, their organizations for effective leadership transition, and successors

31. Tom Mullins, *Passing the Leadership Baton: A winning transition plan for your ministry* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2015), 7.

to receive the baton of leadership so that the kingdom of God will continue in a better and healthy way.

Compared to the past, the evangelical churches of Ethiopia are experiencing greater freedom. There are many new beginning churches, ministries and spiritual movements in the country. When we see the details of the movement and its image in the society it is not encouraging. The relationship between one churches, one denomination with the other denomination, and one association with the other association is full of hatred and conflict. Leaders of the churches accuse each other and one excommunicates the other publicly. Especially in this age of where technology has made information easily available, their accusation is heard by the public easily and its negative impact in the society hinders to transfer the gospel and good news to the society effectively.

The Ethiopian evangelical churches are now divided in to different generations; the new churches belong to the new generation and the old churches belongs to the old generations. From time to time the gap between these generations becomes wider and worst. It is becoming hard to show and proclaim God's love for the society.

For example, recently the Ethiopian Evangelical Churches Fellowship Association, which is led by the so called "old generation leaders" excommunicated one of the new church leader because of his "false prophecy and unbiblical practices"; after that most of the new generation churches formed another association to accuse the old generation leadership publicly. Now the gap between the generations seems irreconcilable.

This conflict confuses the followers of the evangelical believers; because they don't want to isolated themselves from the young generation movement as the old

generation leaders told them to do. Because they saw the revival and charisma in the movement, on the other side their teaching and practice is not trustworthy. No one can correct and give advice to them because they are isolated from their leaders. Now they are leaders by themselves. It confuses the Christian teachings and practices in the country. What a great chaos in the Ethiopian evangelical churches we have at this time. The root cause for this conflict and misunderstanding is the gap created by the generations because of the absence of effective relationship and transition between the existing leaders and emerging leaders.

One of the new generation church leader, responded to the criticism against him by the old generation church leaders' by accusing them for not training, preparing and equipping him for ministry and also of not being willing to show love and share responsibilities in the ministry. So that they lost their credibility and acceptance in the emerging leaders. Malphurs wrote the need of credibility in leadership: "The key to a leader's ability to influence people is his or her credibility. Leaders can't lead without it. When a leader attempts to influence a person, that potential follower engages in a conscious and unconscious evaluation of the leader's credibility. The degree to which the individual grants the leader credibility is the degree to which that leader can influence him or her."³²

Therefore, the main reason for this gap is lack of preparing the generation for leadership and equipping the emerging leaders to continue God's mission in a healthy way. The old generation leadership didn't fulfil their responsibility of preparing, loving and equipping the emerging leaders as their spiritual children and successors. The

32. Aubrey Malphurs and Will Mancini, *Building Leaders: Blueprints for developing leadership at every level of your church*. (Grand Rapids, Bakers Books, 2004), 21.

younger generation didn't see love, care and openness from the old generation leaders. This creates gap between the generations.

Some years ago, before such chaos happened among the evangelical churches in Ethiopia one of the problem in the existing or old generation leaders were creating the sense of they are the only leaders and stay in leadership until the end of their life. That was the beginning of cracking and misunderstanding between generations. The old generation leaders were not aware of the need of preparing and training the emerging leaders and prepare themselves for effective leadership transition. Effective leaders understand that everyone is important and valuable to the church. The leaders need to treat all people like important people, even when they behave poorly or don't deserve it. The need of developing effective leadership transition is very vital in the evangelical churches in Ethiopia.

As Mullins wrote in his book: "There are three ways I can leave. You can carry me out, you can kick me out, or I can walk out. I choose to walk out. Smart leaders always walk out while they are on top of their game because when they are at their zenith, the organization is strong and will be able to withstand the winds of change that come from a transition."³³ Even if the existing leaders are strong and successful there will be time to leave and quit from leadership; so, it is better to prepare for leadership transition before the time comes. The existing leaders need to start to think and work for effective leadership transition while their ministry is going well and is effective.

33. Tom Mullins, *Passing the Leadership Baton: A winning transition plan for your ministry* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2015), 24.

2.3.3. Barriers on effective Leadership Transition

2.3.3.1. Lack of Planning

One of the church leaders task while they are doing the leadership task is preparing themselves and others for the inevitability of leadership transition. “For one thing, leadership change is inevitable. No one lives forever. No one is viable forever.”³⁴ Unfortunately, because many Ethiopian evangelical churches leaders fail to think through the importance of preparation and planning for transitions, the consequences are disturbing, not only for the leaders, but also for the churches they lead in. As George Barna in his book wrote, failing in leadership succession will hurt the whole organization or church; “Some of the world’s leaders experienced great success, but because they failed miserably at succession, their life accomplishments collapsed shortly after their departure. One of the most important legacies a leader can give or leave the institution is a smooth transition in leadership where the organizational alliance can be quickly and readily given to the new leader.”³⁵ There is a traditional saying; “If you fail to plan, you plan to fail.” Preparation and planning for leadership transition is very important for a healthy church.

2.3.3.2. Lack of Knowledge

This is one of the problems in developing leaders and practicing an effective leadership transition in the church. As Malphurs wrote “Leadership inability is a primary cause for delays in the leadership development. This means that the existing leadership

34. Terry Roberts, *Passing the Baton: Planning for Pastoral Transition*. (USA, NavPress Publishing Group, 2015), 17.

35. George Barna, *Leaders on Leadership: Wisdom, Advice and Encouragement on the Art of Leading God’s People* (Ventura, California: Regal Books, 1982), 298.

doesn't have the training to equip other leaders."³⁶ Without having a proper knowledge and training on how to raise and develop the emerging leaders it is difficult to see the responsible and well-equipped leaders to take the leadership responsibility and have a successful leadership transition.

In the context of the Ethiopian evangelical churches this is a challenge for the existing leaders, because some of them don't have formal theological or biblical training, and those that do, they do not have formal leadership training. Malphurs and Mancini in their book said:

Competency is based to a great degree on knowing what to do. In God's preparation of Moses for leadership, he specifically taught him what to do (Exod. 4:15). This is where seminarians come up short far too often. They are trained well in crucial areas, such as languages, theology, and church history, but receive little training—if any—in leadership. A seminary student once said that his biggest struggle as a pastor-leader was knowing what to do.³⁷

So lack of knowledge, particularly how to do things, such as how to handle the leadership transition process and how to prepare himself or herself and how to develop potential leaders will affect and becomes an obstacle for effective leadership transition.

2.3.3.3. Self-Centeredness

It is the greatest challenge and obstacle in leadership transition, especially in the Ethiopian evangelical churches leadership. When people began to forget their stewardship in ministry they start to focus on themselves, rather than focusing on God and serving others. After that they began to despise others and acting like arrogant bosses. This misleads the whole congregation and its purpose to unwanted directions and promoting self-egos.

The greatest obstacle to effective spiritual leadership is people pursuing their own agendas rather than seeking God's will. God is working throughout the world to achieve his purposes and to

36. Aubrey Malphurs and Will Mancini, *Building Leaders: Blueprints for developing leadership at every level of your church*. (Grand Rapids, Bakers Books, 2004), 31.

37. *Ibid.*, 148.

advance his kingdom. God's concern is not to advance leaders' dreams and goals or to build their kingdoms. His purpose is to turn his people away from their self-centeredness and their sinful desires and to draw them into a relationship with himself. The key to spiritual leadership, then, is for spiritual leaders to understand God's will for them and for their organization. Leaders then move people away from their own agendas on to God's. It sounds simple enough, but the truth is that many Christian leaders fail to put this basic truth into practice.³⁸

If self-agenda become the center of focus in leadership, other than God's plan it is a great obstacle to have effective leadership transition and to trust others to hand over the leadership responsibility. It is God who trusted leaders and appoint them to His flock to lead as stewards; it is not to lead as we want without His leadership.

When John the Baptist looked Jesus, he said: "He must increase, but I must decrease" John 3:30; this is what being steward in leadership. Stewardship in leadership requires denying self-egos and self-ambition. Hunter in his book wrote to define selflessness:

Selflessness is defined as "meeting the needs of others." What a beautiful definition of leadership: to meet the needs of others. The will to serve and sacrifice for others, the willingness to set aside our wants and needs in seeking the greatest good for others – this is what to be selfless. This is what it means to be the leader.... The road to servant leadership lies not in trying to fix or change others but in working on changing and improving ourselves.³⁹

As a steward leader, leaders have to realize that despite the fact that they may have invested a large portion of their life to their ministry, it is not their ministry; that ministry belongs to the Lord, but our response to transition is often an indicator of our understanding and acceptance of that fact. We are a steward not an owner. Being a leader of a church makes us a steward of the gifts and talents God has given us.⁴⁰

38. Henry & Richard Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership: Moving people on to God's agenda*. (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Pub., 2001), 23.

39. James c. Hunter, *The World's most powerful Leadership Principles: How to become a servant leader*. New York: Crown Business, 2004, 99-100.

40. Tom Mullins, *Passing the Leadership Baton: A winning transition plan for your ministry* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2015), 39.

I have searched in the Bible the word ‘my church, our church, their church’ I never find the apostles or other church ministers and members said it. Only Jesus Christ called the church “my church”. Only He can be the Lord and the center of focus on the church and its leadership, not leaders. I like how Maxwell stated and I put as it is:

I always have hard time when pastors refer to the church as ‘my church.’ No! it isn’t your church; it’s God’s Church!” The ‘my church’ attitude is a pride issue that causes transition problems, because somebody thinks it is his church, then he will expect the church to serve his needs. And when that happens the pastor become unwilling to transition for the betterment of God’s work in His church. there are so many tragic losses for the kingdom because of people simply weren’t willing to release what God had allowed them to be a part of when their season was over. It’s so important to remember that we are simply stewards of God’s work. Having this perspective makes easier to transition, because we know His master plan for His kingdom is at work. The key to everything is surrender. We must simply be willing to do what God wants. Trust His timing, having no personal attachment to anything other than His will.⁴¹

The sense of ownership in the church is one of the problems that hinders others to get involve and feel at home. Particularly those who are the founders feel they own the church and try to control every activity in the church. Without their approval, nothing is done in the church. This kind of leadership damages the nature of Christ’s church and kills the potential of emerging leaders. “The leaders who hid their best people had a selfish spirit. In contrast, those who promoted and empowered others had a generous spirit.”⁴²

Those leaders who are continuing the leadership by doing everything by themselves and don’t want to build others in leadership are people who don’t trust others. It is very dangerous for them as well as for the church when they suddenly leave the leadership. Because they didn’t develop other leaders to step in to the leadership. The continuity of the church or organization is then at risk. As Mullins stated

One of the most difficult things for a lot of outgoing leaders is simply stepping away from everything they have built and invested in for a significant number of years. A change in that role

41. John C. Maxwell, *The 5 Levels of Leadership: Proven Steps to Maximize your potential.* (Orange, CA, Thomas Nelson, Inc., 1982), 151.

42. Mullins, 218.

threatens their security and identity. When you start something, nurture it, and enjoy the privilege of watching it grow, you will naturally feel a sense of loyalty and pride in it. This can make it really hard to step away and leave it in someone else's hands.⁴³

So that the leadership transition will be full of problems and chaotic.

It is always better to make sure people are following Jesus, not you as a pastor. If the church is too dependent on the pastor we have to cry about it, we can tell others they need to change, or we can help the church as leaders to move towards less dependence on us. That is what Paul and Barnabas did in Acts 14; "Friends, why are you doing this? We are mortals just like you, and we bring you good news, that you should turn from these worthless things to the living God," (Acts 14:15 NRSV).

The leaders making sure everything in the church carries the obvious stamp of Jesus. Not the pastor, the denomination, the new systems, the old traditions, or anything else. Including the preaching and teaching of scriptural principles, not our personal or political biases and training people to read and teach the Bible for themselves are vital in leadership. By doing these shifts to focus on Jesus Christ and developing emerging leaders and start sharing leadership responsibilities will help to lay the foundation of leadership transition.

2.3.3.4. Dictatorship

This is one of the hindrances in the church for the leadership transition. This problem occurs because of the existing leadership values its control of the ministry over the growth of the ministry. When leaders fear that they will lose their power and position in the ministry and are unwilling to develop new leaders, they experience being arrogant and dictators. As Malphurs and Mancini explained in their book:

43. Ibid., 38.

The cost of such a desire to control is huge both for individuals and the church at large. It costs individuals, because they are being robbed of the opportunity to have their gifts, skills, and abilities nurtured and developed. It costs the church at large, because ministry expansion is limited to the resources of a few, rather than released to the resources of the many. Ultimately this means fewer people coming to Christ and growing in Christ.⁴⁴

The consequence of dictatorial leadership will lead the church to be fruitless and become an obstacle for the emerging leaders.

Existing leaders need to approach God with open hands and wait expectantly for Him to faithfully lead the church and follow His leadership. Checking the motives before Him daily and ask His help to move away from being a stumbling block for the emerging leaders; so that to embrace and work on the leadership transition together and make it practical as needed is what is expected from the existing leaders. As spiritual leaders being authorized is not being dictator. “Jesus was talking about leading with authority. In essence, He was saying that if you want to get people to come willingly, then you must serve. Legitimate leadership, influence, is built up on serving, sacrificing, and seeking the greatest good of those being led. Influence doesn’t come because of a title or an army. Influence must be earned. There are no shortcuts.”⁴⁵

Conclusion

To sum up, leadership transition is an essential instrument for the growth and health of the church in every generation. It should be done with great concern and preparation for the expansion of God’s kingdom. As Roberts wrote: “Pastoral succession does far more than stabilize a congregation during a change of leadership. It offers immediate benefit to the veteran and successor and potentially, to many others beyond their local church. More importantly, it establishes a Kingdom-oriented legacy of pastoral

44. Malphurs, 32.

45. James c. Hunter, *The World’s most powerful Leadership Principles: How to become a servant leader*. (New York: Crown Business, 2004), 73.

ministry.”⁴⁶ The benefits of effective leadership transition are a lot for the use of existing leaders’ cumulated resource in God’s Kingdom.

On the other hand, it benefits for the next generation. When there is effective and peaceful leadership transition it facilitates the use of God-given potential directly to advance God’s Kingdom for the next generation. Damazio advises “The senior pastor must accept the responsibility to raise a successor.”⁴⁷ It is the existing leaders’ responsibility to raise the emerging leaders and successors and also to facilitate an effective leadership transition between them and successors. Russel in his book wrote the following: “A wise person faces his mortality and a loving person thinks of the next generation. To fail to do both is folly and selfish.”⁴⁸ Being concerned about leadership transition and working diligently on it is being careful about the ministry and loving the next generation.

So the Ethiopian evangelical churches leaders need to work hard and prepare themselves for an effective leadership transition for the benefit of existing leaders, emerging leaders and for the expansion of God’s kingdom at large. It is a jointly work for the benefit of Christ’s church; the existing leaders, emerging leaders, the churches’ leadership and the congregation need to work together to make it practical for the leadership transition in the Ethiopian evangelical churches in Ethiopia.

Let me conclude with Damazio’s suggestion about the leadership transition application in the local church: “After the eldership confirms it, the congregation should

46. Terry Roberts, *Passing the Baton: Planning for Pastoral Transition*. (USA, NavPress Publishing Group, 2015), 34.

47. Frank Damazio, *The Vanguard Leader: A New Breed of Leader to Encounter the Future*. (Portland, OR: Bible Temple Publishing, 1994), 309.

48. Bob Russell and Bryan Bucher, *Transition Plan*. (Louisville, KY: Ministers Label Publishing, 2010), 63.

be given the opportunity to confirm it. Then they will have a three-fold witness: the pastor's heart, the eldership's heart, and the heart of the congregation.”⁴⁹ The hearts of all responsible groups in the church must agree and work together for the practicality of effective leadership transition in the church.

49. Frank Damazio, 290.

Chapter 3

Biblical Foundations for Effective Leadership Transition

The Bible reveals God's pattern of working through successive generations. In The Bible there are many leadership transition occurrences that have been recorded; some good examples, some not. The Scriptures, both the Old Testament and the New Testament record indicates centuries of God using individual leaders to accomplish His purpose in each generations. From the beginning God gave his people specific instructions concerning how they were to train and prepare the emerging generations of leaders (Deut. 6:6-9; 20-25).

3.1. The Old Testament Examples of Effective Leadership Transition

For God's purpose to continue, each generation must be prepared to embrace a fresh relationship of love for Him and obedience to His word. That is why true and visionary spiritual leaders are always investing in the next generation of leaders. It's not by accident that great leaders follow in the footsteps of great spiritual leaders. Joshua succeeded the revered Moses and even surpassed his accomplishments by conquering the land Moses had been unable to overcome. Elisha not only followed the mighty Elijah as prophet, he was given a double portion of Elijah's spirit (2Kings 2:9-10).⁵⁰

50. Henry & Richard Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership: Moving people on to God's agenda* (Nashville, TN. Broadman & Holman Pub., 2001), 278.

We also see the great need to train and prepare men to serve as leaders among God's people. Before Joshua stepped up to be Israel's leader, he first served as Moses' assistant as it is written: "So Moses arose with his assistant Joshua, and Moses went up to the mountain of God." (Exodus 24:13). That was part of Joshua's critical training. For the good of the entire nation of Israel, God told Moses, "But command Joshua, and encourage him and strengthen him; for he shall go over before this people, and he shall cause them to inherit the land which you will see" (Deuteronomy 3:28). So, before Joshua took on the mantle of leading God's people, God wanted him to be instructed, encouraged, and strengthened. That was another portion of Joshua's preparation and training. The church needs to do that very thing today: training and preparing faithful brothers to be leaders and transferring the leadership responsibility as needed.

From the biblical examples of successful leadership transitions I select the following leaders and their transition as a biblical reference.

3.1.1. Moses to Joshua

The Bible provides a rich source of guidance in addressing succession. The model example in the Old Testament is the transition from Moses to Joshua. Moses seems irreplaceable. Because he is the one who challenged Pharaoh, the most powerful ruler in the world, he is the one who received the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai, and who spoke to God face to face.

Even though he seems exceptional, he is also the one who understood how critical succession is. Because of that he asked God for the successor and God answered Moses by appointing Joshua as his successor and instructing Moses to ordain and bless him

before the people. The transition effectively happened and Joshua was accepted by the people, and he became an extraordinary leader. This is one of the best effective leadership transition example in the Bible. What made this transition so successful and effective? What can we learn from it? I want to mention some important points from Moses' and Joshua's practical action:

3.1.1.1.Moses as an Existing Leader

1) Initiates the succession plan: Moses as an existing leader was the one who initiated the succession plan. It was Moses who recognized his own limit and mortality. He knew he will not live forever. To assure God's people reach to their destiny, he needed to find a successor. In the book of Numbers Moses addresses it directly by asking God. "Moses said to the LORD, 'May the LORD, the God who gives breath to all living things, appoint someone over this community to go out and come in before them, one who will lead them out and bring them in, so the LORD's people will not be like sheep without a shepherd'." (Num., 27:15-17 NIV)

The success of his life's mission depended on it. Too often leaders delay or resist succession planning. They prefer not to deal with the issue because it points to their own shortcoming and mortality. It can feel frightening, even if it is not. Moses chose the opposite route and so should we as leaders to have effective leadership transition for the benefit of the people we are leading. Leadership without succession plan leads to destruction.

Leadership development and succession planning is not about replacement. Leadership development and succession planning is about reproduction. In far too many cases, we have allowed our thinking to shift into leadership placement over leadership

development. When we focus on replacement, we dismiss the responsibility we are given as church leaders.

What some would call succession planning is really just replacement planning. Both plans have their place and sometimes overlap, especially in emergency or unexpected succession. Replacement planning looks more like risk management and is often a folder to pull out if a key leader suffers a medical emergency or experiences a moral failure that immediately removes the individual from leadership. True succession planning is quite different.

According to Adkins:

Many churches are waking up to the fact that every pastor is an interim pastor. But the truth remains that this maxim plays out at every level of your church's leadership pipeline. Every role in your church is an interim position. Life happens. Someone gets sick, moves away, or gets burned out from being on point every week. Imagine it's Saturday at 8pm and you're the preschool director at your church. The couple who teaches your 3-year-olds just texted that they have the flu. Who do you call to teach the 3-year-olds their weekly Bible lesson? Or consider that you've pastored at the same church for 20 years and are nearing retirement age. However, a sudden medical diagnosis has expedited your retirement to now. Who will fill the pulpit and minister to your congregation? Odds are strong that your church has faced similar circumstances. So how is your ministry prepared to respond to each of the scenarios? Do you have the people and process in place to ensure continuity of ministry takes place? How do you ensure this continuity? Every leader must develop at least one successor.⁵¹

Development within a leadership pipeline requires an investment of intentional time and effort. You can't simply empower someone with in a short period of time or on a few phone calls. Succession happens when your people are engaged by the mission, equipped to do it, and accept the responsibility to carry it out. Leadership development must occur up close face to face.

Succession planning focuses on leadership reproduction over leadership replacement and leads with a proactive posture, not a reactive one. Succession planning

51. Todd Adkins. <https://www.lifeway.com> How Succession Planning Benefits Your Church on Wednesday, September 20, 2017, (accessed, January 20, 2018).

also provides continuity of leadership by cultivating leaders within the church or organization's leadership pipeline. Succession is not only concerned with the top levels of leadership or the key leaders of the organization but is a long-term investment strategy in the organization's most valuable resource: its people.

The defining legacy of any leader is the quality of those you develop and your ability to transition out of your role—at any time and for any reason, with little drama or disruption. We are called to equip the saints for the work of the ministry. If we do so, we will see unity in the body, maturity measured in the fullness of Christ, and a multiplication of ministry and ministers that hasn't been seen since the early church. Leaders build an army, not just an audience. We must shift the conversation from talking about our church's seating capacity to its sending capacity.⁵²

2) Healthy Relationship with the Successor: As an existing leader he created a good bridge with the emerging generation. As leaders creating a spiritually led father-son and mentor-mentee relationship develops the emerging leaders in a healthy way and leads to an effective leadership transition. While Joshua was a leader among many leaders, when Moses sent the leaders of each tribe to spy Canaan, Joshua was one to represent the house of Ephraim, as written: “from the tribe of Ephraim, Hoshea the son of Nun; ... And Moses called Hoshea the son of Nun, Joshua.” (Num. 13:8 &16) and he was the leaders of fighters in the war against Amalekites; “And Moses said to Joshua, “Choose us some men and go out, fight with Amalek. Tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in my hand.” So Joshua did as Moses said to him, and fought with Amalek.” (Exodus 17:9-10), he was also an aide to Moses (Ex 24:13).

52. Ibid.

This unique position enabled him to establish a relationship which would develop servanthood characteristics. Joshua was learning how to function and behave as a leader.⁵³

3) Mentoring and Coaching the Successor: When Moses learned that he would not lead Israel into Canaan, he immediately prayed for a successor: “O Lord, please appoint a new man as leader... so the community of the Lord will not be like sheep without a shepherd” (Num. 27:15 NLT). The Lord instructed Moses to appoint his assistant Joshua, the man he had mentored for nearly forty years (Ex. 34:9). The successor was with him, following and learning from him for long time. When the need of leadership transition comes Moses and Israelites were not confused, and assign a pastoral search committee. Joshua was there prepared for this time. He was trained, coached, and mentored by Moses. As Clinton wrote:

God was testing Joshua’s faithfulness and obedience (Num. 13,14). Again, the emphasis was upon Joshua’s inner qualities. His past experience with divine testing process (Ex. 16, 17) gave him a basis for discerning appropriate behavior during this time. His response to this task would be a good indicator of his ability to lead the Israelites into the Promised Land. It was a task, adequately met, which led to greater responsibility.⁵⁴

He was following Moses and God was preparing Joshua for the higher level leadership task through Moses. This is one of the existing leaders’ responsibility to prepare the emerging leaders by mentoring and coaching since the beginning of their leadership task.

4) Seeks guidance: Moses does not try to pick his successor alone. He turns to God and he listens for God’s wisdom. He recognizes the importance of the task; the people cannot be like sheep without a shepherd, so he seeks input from his most trusted

53. Bobby Clinton and Kathrine Haubert, *The Joshua Portrait: A Study in Leadership Development, Leadership Transition, & Destiny Fulfillment*. (Altadena, CA., Barnabas Pub.,1990), 29.

54. *Ibid.*, 28.

advisor, God. A good leader knows he or she does not have all the answers and solutions.

We need to listen for insight from God. Bobby Clinton described about God's initiator

for the succession of leadership in relation with Joshua:

This period of time was initiated by God's selection of Joshua as Moses' successor (Num. 27:12-23). It was marked by events confirming God's choice. It was a transitional segment in which Joshua moved into primary leadership position. Revelation was catalyst. God revealed that Joshua was Moses' successor. confirmation followed with public acknowledgement, affirmation, and commissioning.... Thus, the actual transition in to position occurred.⁵⁵

As the Bible clearly says He is the one who can send the laborers into His harvest:

"when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest truly *is* plentiful, but the laborers *are* few.

Therefore pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."

Matthew 9:36-38. So seeking His guidance as a leader is essential before selecting and assigning the successor.

When the leaders of the church of Antioch, in the first century fast and pray, the Holy Spirit led them to identify the mission leaders. "As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent *them* away." (Acts 13:2-3) We always have to depend on God and need His guidance in selecting and doing the leaders and the transition as well.

5) Makes the decision open to the people: In the book of Numbers Moses "took Joshua and had him stand before Eleazer the priest and the whole assembly. Then he laid his hands on Him and ordained him" (22:22-23). Moses ordains Joshua before the whole assembly. Everyone sees whom God and Moses have chosen.

55. Ibid., 37.

According to Deuteronomy 31, Joshua did not assume full leadership of Israel until Moses was about to die. However, at some point well in advance of that, God instructed Moses to bring Joshua before the people, lay his hands on him, and transfer some of your authority to him so the whole community will obey him. Although Joshua had been Moses' loyal assistant for nearly forty years, this "pre-commissioning" ceremony elevated Joshua to a higher level of authority in the eyes of the people while Moses was still their official leader. It also gave Joshua the opportunity to try his hand at decision making while still under Moses' watchful eye.

And the LORD said to Moses: "Take Joshua the son of Nun with you, a man in whom *is* the Spirit, and lay your hand on him; set him before Eleazar the priest and before all the congregation, and inaugurate him in their sight. And you shall give *some* of your authority to him, that all the congregation of the children of Israel may be obedient. He shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall inquire before the LORD for him by the judgment of the Urim. At his word they shall go out, and at his word they shall come in, he and all the children of Israel with him—all the congregation." (Num. 27:18-21)⁵⁶

6) Blessing and authorizing the Successor: There are times when God's people have to face a transition in leadership. Moses admirably led Israel for forty years, but he could not live forever. Following his passing, Israel would need to accept the reality of the transition to Joshua. Joshua, the son of Nun and the assistant of Moses, was God's choice. His choice for what? To step in and be the leader of the Israelites following Moses' death.

The Lord had this crucial transition in mind long before it came to pass. He had even communicated His plan to the Israelites. God told Moses, "Behold, the days approach when you must die; call Joshua, and present yourselves in the tabernacle of meeting, that I may inaugurate him" (Deuteronomy 31:14). In this case, the Lord installed

56. Terry Roberts, 53

Joshua by Moses, as he “laid his hands on him and inaugurated him, just as the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses” (Numbers 27:23). This all reminds us that nothing is strange for God or catches God by surprise. He knows the future as well as you and He see the past or present. In preparing them for that moment, God had told Moses to lay hands on Joshua and give him authority so that the Israelites would obey him.

Moses does not just hand over keys to Joshua and leave. He lays his hands up on Joshua’s head and he speaks words of commission into his heart. He blesses him. A blessing means more than an endorsement of approval. A blessing speaks confidence into the heart. A blessing expresses a trust deeper than just a handshake. A blessing is a transferring of deep love and wish to the successor. It shows Moses’ concern, trust and approval for Joshua.

Moses continue encouraging and affirming his successor as follows: “Be strong and of good courage, for you must go with this people to the land which the Lord has sworn to their fathers to give them, and you shall cause them to inherit it. And the Lord, He *is* the One who goes before you. He will be with you, He will not leave you nor forsake you; do not fear nor be dismayed.” (Deuteronomy 31:7-8).

After Moses’ death, the people were not complaining by remembering Moses’ leadership style. Israel enjoyed a smooth, peaceful transition to Joshua, in part because he had been prepared for the task and the people had been prepared mentally for it as well.

What God’s people would need from the new leader, Joshua, was what they had gotten from the previous leader, Moses. What was that? “Then they answered Joshua, ‘Whatever you have commanded us we will do, and wherever you send us we will

go. Just as we fully obeyed Moses, so we will obey you. Only may the LORD your God be with you as he was with Moses. Whoever rebels against your word and does not obey it, whatever you may command them, will be put to death. Only be strong and courageous!” (Joshua 1:16-18 NIV).

After the commissioning service, the congregation got the opportunity to express their support for the new leader. Even though Joshua was fearing that the people would disobey him, after he was appointed all the elders of Israel declared to him that they will obeyed him as they obeyed his predecessor. It is not because of his personality, but because of God. We must not live in the past, but in the present, looking to a great future with our great God leading the way. As leader David has faith on God to lead the people to victory and he said: “The LORD, who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.” (1Sam 17:37)

Many people, particularly the old generation do not like change, but what the Israelites teach us here is whoever comes to the leadership, the key thing is the presence of God with that leader. So that as existing leaders, emerging leaders, and people of God this should encourage and motivate us to do is His will and His presence should be our driving force to do ministry as well as leadership transition.

That is exactly the kind of men that we need leading God’s people today in Ethiopian Churches: strong and courageous appointed by God and blessed by His successor to advance God’s kingdom in his generation.

3.1.1.2.Joshua as the Successor

And when it comes to facing transition and becoming the next leader in line, nothing could be harder for an up and coming leader to replace the previous leadership

especially if the latter was promising and effective. Here are some important principles⁵⁷ for those who are succeeding previous leadership.

1) Be Courage in God! Joshua faced the same dilemma when he succeeded the great leader that was Moses. However, God promises Him in Joshua 1:5, "No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you or forsake you," and then commands him over and over again to be courageous in this.

When faced with leadership transition, God calls us to put our courage in knowing that it is His leadership ultimately that guides us and that we are simply to be instruments for Him. Every organization is God-lead and when we allow God to take control, we will see greater success than if we did things on our own.

Even as the existing leader Moses command Joshua to lift up his eyes on to God and be courageous in Him. ‘And I commanded Joshua at that time, saying, Your eyes have seen all that the LORD your God has done to these two kings; so will the LORD do to all the kingdoms through which you pass. You must not fear them, for the LORD your God Himself fights for you.’” Deuteronomy 3:21-22. As an emerging leader it is fundamental to fix the eyes on God and follow His orders and leadership with courage.

2) Be yourself! Stop trying to be the other version of the previous leader. Often transitioning leaders will try to follow in the footsteps of previous leadership. While we try to learn and grow with the foundation laid by previous leaders, we must never hide under their shadows. God is a respecter of the unique personalities and strengths of different people, and the reason why God calls you in this season to lead is because He

57. Patrick Mabilog. <http://www.christiantoday.com> Tips for new leaders: Highlighting Jesus is the key to a smooth leadership transition Wed 22 Jun 2016, (accessed, April, 2018).

needs your talents and expertise at this time. It is always so important to follow and imitate the Master leader, not be the copy of the previous leader. Because God doesn't photocopy us; but He created all of us in His own image. So that all of us are called uniquely to accomplish His purpose on each of us.

For example when we see Moses crossing the Red Sea he just hit the river and divided it in to two; whereas in the Jordan River Joshua didn't copy or imitate Moses. He followed God's order and told the chiefs to go inside the water first, then it will stop flowing. That is how they crossed the Jordan River. (Joshua 3:7 and Exodus 14:16). So emerging leaders are not the other versions of their predecessors; they are the appointed leaders on God's time to do His will on their own generation. God needs you in this season to lead, not the previous leader. That's why He allows transition.

3.1.2. David to Solomon

One of the successful leaders in the Bible is King David. The Bible testifies his final accomplishment as follows: "He raised up for them David as king, to whom also He gave testimony and said, 'I have found David the *son* of Jesse, a man after My *own* heart, who will do all My will... For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God fell asleep," (Acts 13:22, 36).

After serving and leading for forty years David named Solomon as his successor at the right time. The leadership transition from David to Solomon was successful and effective. From this transition there are very important lessons and principles we learn.

3.1.2.1. Prioritizing God's will

At the end of David's leadership what the Holy Spirit testified about his life and leadership was the accomplishment of God's will in his generation, including the leadership transition to Solomon. When David was trying to build the Temple, God sent a message through his prophet telling him that his successor will build the Temple. "When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. (2 Samuel 7:12-14)

By understanding and giving priority to God's will, he obeyed and committed himself to God's will. After he heard from God he facilitated and prepared for the emerging leader, his successor Solomon. This is what he said: "And of all my sons (for the LORD has given me many sons) He has chosen my son Solomon to sit on the throne of the kingdom of the LORD over Israel. Now He said to me, 'It is your son Solomon *who* shall build My house and My courts; for I have chosen him *to be* My son, and I will be his Father. (1Chron. 28:5,6). As an existing leader David knew the will of God and obeyed it.

According to George Barna:

One reason David was such an effective general and king was that he was aware of God's leading. He constantly asked God for direction and then obeyed. Later in his reign when God told him he would not build the Temple, David surrendered to God's plan and turned over the project to his successor. Like David, we, too, are mortal. We do not know how much time we have left to serve in our present positions. God is sovereign and His timing is always at play. We have no guarantee that we will have many tomorrows, so we need to surrender to God's will, trusting in His wisdom and following His direction.⁵⁸

58. Barna, 301.

For David God's will is always his driving force. That is what made him "a man after My *own* heart, who will do all My will". Leaders always expected to connect to the Master Leader and know His will and lead accordingly.

3.1.2.2. Leadership Transition between family members

In Ethiopian history and as well as other developing countries the leadership transition between family members is common. Particularly in the kingship system of political leadership it is the popular way of transferring leadership authority and task.

In the Western church leadership this is also one of the ways for leadership transition. Especially in the Western churches it is one of the well-known ways of transitioning leadership. There are some reservations in the effectiveness of this kind of leadership transition. Because some believe leadership should not transfer to the family member just because of his relationship to the existing leaders. In the context of Ethiopian evangelical churches this is not accepted by the majority of church leaders and Christian society. But still there are some practical leadership transitions in the Ethiopian evangelical churches. What is the biblical base for such leadership transitions between the family members?

The leadership transition between David and Solomon shows us it can be God's will and effective between the family members in leadership transition. As it is written; "Now the days of David drew near that he should die, and he charged Solomon his son, saying: "I go the way of all the earth; be strong, therefore, and prove yourself a man. And keep the charge of the LORD your God: to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, His commandments, His judgments, and His testimonies, as it is written in the Law of Moses," (1King 2:1-3).

David and Solomon did the leadership transition according to the will of God. Even if David had many other sons, God raised and filled Solomon with wisdom and understanding to lead His people. “Then God said to him: Because you have asked this thing, and have not asked long life for yourself, nor have asked riches for yourself, nor have asked the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern justice, behold, I have done according to your words; see, I have given you a wise and understanding heart, so that there has not been anyone like you before you, nor shall any like you arise after you.” 1King 3:11-12

Even though all leadership transitions have its own defect and strength, the family member leadership transition by itself has its effective and ineffective side too. Tom and Todd are father and son, after twenty-five years of effective leadership as a lead pastor Tom transferred his leadership to his son effectively and Todd continued to lead the church effectively. Even if they are family members, as Tom wrote; “Todd grew up as a leader. He had a clear calling to lifelong leadership at Christ Fellowship, so I knew he would one day be my successor.”⁵⁹ If the successor of the family member of the existing leader is called and gifted by God for leadership it can be effective and successful.

3.1.2.3. How to prepare and transfer the vision

David as an existing leader cast the vision to his successor Solomon. “Then David gave his son Solomon the plans for the vestibule, its houses, its treasuries, its upper chambers, its inner chambers, and the place of the mercy seat; and the plans for all that he had by the Spirit, of the courts of the house of the LORD, of all the chambers all around, of the treasuries of the house of God,” (1Chron. 28:11-12).

59. Mullins, 15.

One of the existing leaders' role and assignment is to work and transfer the God given core values and vision of the church to the next generation. Because David had shed so much blood as king, God determined not to allow him to build a house for the Lord. Instead David's son, Solomon, was given that task. When David heard from God about his son, the successor, will build the Temple he was not angry and resistant. But David accepted that and began to do his final task to train and prepare Solomon for the job of king and leadership.

Now David said, Solomon my son *is* young and inexperienced, and the house to be built for the LORD *must be* exceedingly magnificent, famous and glorious throughout all countries. I will now make preparation for it." So David made abundant preparations before his death. Then he called for his son Solomon, and charged him to build a house for the LORD God of Israel. And David said to Solomon: "My son, as for me, it was in my mind to build a house to the name of the LORD my God; but the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 'You have shed much blood and have made great wars; you shall not build a house for My name, because you have shed much blood on the earth in My sight. Behold, a son shall be born to you, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from all his enemies all around. His name shall be Solomon, for I will give peace and quietness to Israel in his days. He shall build a house for My name, and he shall be My son, and I *will be* his Father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel forever.'" (1 Chron. 22:5-10).

David provided the huge stores of materials for the construction of God's temple in Jerusalem. He publicly passed authority to Solomon and made sure that the leaders of Israel acknowledged Solomon as the new leader and were prepared to help him succeed.

David recognized that leadership is a responsibility that continues one's own career. In most cases, the work of the true leader will continue after he moved on whether by promotion, retirement, or taking a different job. As a leader you have a duty to create the conditions your successor needs to be successful.

In David's preparation for Solomon, we see three important elements of succession planning. First, you need to provide and facilitate the resources your successor

needs to complete the tasks you leave unfinished. If you have been at least moderately successful, you will have learned how to gather the resources needed in your position. Often this depends on relationships that your successor will not immediately inherit. For example, success may depend on assistance from people who do not work in your department, but who have been willing to help you in your work. You need to make sure your successor knows who these people are, and you need to get their commitment to continue helping after you are gone. David arranged for all kinds of resources and people he had developed relationships with to work for Solomon after he was gone.

“Moreover *there are* workmen with you in abundance: woodsmen and stonecutters, and all types of skillful men for every kind of work. Of gold and silver and bronze and iron *there is* no limit. Arise and begin working, and the LORD be with you.” (1 Chron. 22:15).

Second, you need to impart your knowledge and relationships to the person who succeeds you. In many situations this will come by bringing your successor to work together with you long before you depart. David began including Solomon in the leadership structures and rituals of the kingdom. “The king also said to them, ‘Take with you the servants of your lord, and have Solomon my son ride on my own mule, and take him down to Gihon. There let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him king over Israel; and blow the horn, and say, ‘*Long live King Solomon!*’ Then you shall come up after him, and he shall come and sit on my throne, and he shall be king in my place. For I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and Judah.” (1 Kings 1:33-35).

Third, by preparing and imparting the vision and authority into the successor. As an existing leader you need to transfer vision and authority decisively to the person who

takes over the position. Whether you choose your own successor or whether others make that decision without your input, you still have a choice whether or not to publicly acknowledge the transition and definitively pass on the authority you previously had as we see and learn from David and Solomon transition. Your words and actions will confer either a blessing or a curse on your successor.

3.1.3. Elijah to Elisha

Elijah is one of the prominent prophets in the Bible. Not only in the Old Testament, he is also one of the best-known prophet in the New Testament. In Jesus' earthly ministry in the Mount of Transfiguration he is the one who showed up with Moses and Jesus. (Mt. 17:1-3). The coming of John the Baptist before Jesus will come in the spirit of Elijah. "He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, 'to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,' and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." (Luke 1:17). So Elijah's ministry in the Bible is well known in both Testaments.

The main text for the succession of Elisha in Elijah's ministry is 1Kings 19. At the start of the chapter Elijah is at a high point of his success as a prophet, having demonstrated the sovereignty of Israel's God over against Baal, and having slaughtered the prophets of Baal in chapter 18. From this leadership transition we can learn basic lessons for effective leadership transition.

3.1.3.1. Leadership transition is required by God

His career takes a fast fall, however, as Jezebel hears of it, and threatens to slaughter him for his acts; he run into the wilderness fearing for his life, then continues his flight for forty days into Sinai (19:3). After that he gave up and asked God to die. “But he himself went a day’s journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a broom tree. And he prayed that he might die, and said, “It is enough! Now, LORD, take my life, for I *am* no better than my fathers!” (19:5).

During the low point of his life, Elijah prayed to die and finish his ministry and leadership without replacing himself and making a leadership transition to continue what he has started. For his prayer God’s response was: “And the angel of the LORD came back the second time, and touched him, and said, “Arise *and* eat, because the journey *is* too great for you.” (19:7). what is the great journey ahead of him? It was preparing leaders and appointing them and making a leadership transition between him and Elisha. That was the great journey!

“Then the LORD said to him: ‘Go, return on your way to the Wilderness of Damascus; and when you arrive, anoint Hazael *as* king over Syria. Also you shall anoint Jehu the son of Nimshi *as* king over Israel. And Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel Meholah you shall anoint *as* prophet in your place.” (19:15-16) God required existing leaders to prepare and replace leaders to continue His work through generations.

At Horeb, the mountain where Moses received the Commandments, Elijah’s ministry is set back on track as the Lord commands him to head back into the fight. There are three components of this command, three designations or responsibilities that Elijah

must perform: he must anoint Hazael of Syria, Jehu of Israel, and Elisha as the appointed prophet in his place.

This passage points to a number of important elements in succession. The first is the value or advantage of settled succession to the prophet. While we cannot say that we hear of the burnt-out Elijah being encouraged at Horeb, the prospect of help at least gets him to leave his cave and return to his prophetic work. Secondly the focus of succession is clearly in the Lord's will. Succession is not something Elijah conceived or requested; God both initiated the idea and announced the candidate. Elijah immediately leaves to find Elisha plowing in the field, and found him. Elisha joins Elijah's ministry began serving him immediately.

“So he departed from there, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who *was* plowing *with* twelve yoke *of oxen* before him, and he was with the twelfth. Then Elijah passed by him and threw his mantle on him. And he left the oxen and ran after Elijah, and said, “Please let me kiss my father and my mother, and *then* I will follow you.” (19:19-20).

This is one of the great and very important assignment for the existing leaders since they start the task of leadership. Because leadership is not about the limited ability and time of leaders; it is accomplishing the responsibility of God's eternal plan through generations. So it requires effective leadership transition through the existing leaders to the emerging or coming leaders.

3.1.3.2. Persistence in following until the end

The other important text touching on the question of succession is 2nd Kings chapter 2. It describes the ascension of Elijah and the commencement of Elisha's

ministry. Here, it is established the clear succession of Elisha to Elijah. Elijah understands the time has come for the Lord to take him, and Elisha accompanies him toward the wilderness. Elijah however desires to make the final journey alone, but Elisha refuses. Elijah's motives in asking are not clear, may be testing, though Elisha's persistence seems to express his readiness and devotion to follow and step into the new work.

After the continued request of Elisha's double portion, Elijah replied, "So he said, "You have asked a hard thing. *Nevertheless*, if you see me *when I am* taken from you, it shall be so for you; but if not, it shall not be *so*." Then it happened, as they continued on and talked, that suddenly a chariot of fire *appeared* with horses of fire, and separated the two of them; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven." And Elisha saw *it*, and he cried out, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and its horsemen!" (2King 2:10-12)

Elisha was focused and patient until the end and Elisha does see the ascension, does attain the prophet's mantle, and does embark on a prophetic career. The "double portion" was granted; it means that Elisha succeeded Elijah as prophet in Israel. Elisha followed and persistently waited the time and at the end he received the responsibility of leadership with authority.

Elisha became the successor to Elijah's ministry and Elisha is explicitly a prophet in Elijah's place. The elements in Elijah's service reappear or are completed in Elisha's service. As to particular details, the anointing of Jehu expected of Elijah was in fact accomplished by Elisha; and the end of Jezebel prophesied by Elijah is brought about under Elisha.

Now when Jehu had come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard *of it*; and she put paint on her eyes and adorned her head, and looked through a window. Then, as Jehu entered

at the gate, she said, “*Is it peace, Zimri, murderer of your master?*” And he looked up at the window, and said, “*Who is on my side? Who?*” So two *or* three eunuchs looked out at him. Then he said, “*Throw her down.*” So they threw her down, and *some* of her blood spattered on the wall and on the horses; (2 Kings 9:30-33).

In these ways, we see Elisha continued what Elijah began. That is exactly what effective leadership succession do.

Mostly the temptation of the emerging leaders is lack of patience and persistent.

As an emerging leader Elisha is one of the examples of being persistent and devout for the upcoming leadership task and responsibility until God’s timing. This is clearly one of the reasons that makes the leadership transition ineffective and abort in many of the life and ministry of emerging leaders.

When an emerging leaders lack patience and persistence and tries to push the existing leaders for change and transition the attitude of the existing leaders towards their successor will be full of doubt. As of my observation this is one of the most practical obstacle in effective leadership transition. One pastor who experienced the leadership transition effectively wrote the following very important issue in relation with the need of patience for the successors or emerging leaders:

Our transition would not have gone nearly as well as it did if Todd had pushed me on the timing. As the senior, it was my job to determine the best timing for Todd, our church, and our team so we could be sure to execute a smooth pass of the baton. In the meantime, Todd’s job was to continue to prepare himself for that day and to be faithful to the current tasks he was responsible for, knowing his time to lead would come when it was best.⁶⁰

Such patient and faithfulness encourages and motivates the existing leaders to trust their successor to hand over the leadership responsibility confidently. It is very important to be patient until the existing leader finishes his responsibility and leadership term.

60. Mullins, 106-107.

3.2. The New Testament Examples of Effective Leadership Transition

In the New Testament there are many examples of leadership transition in an effective and successful way. The following three transitions are the selected effective leadership transitions in my research.

3.2.1. John the Baptist to Jesus

John the Baptist is one of the prominent leaders raised before Jesus came, and began His ministry on earth. As he was leading people and preaching he saw his successor, Jesus and transferred his leadership to Him. As an existing leader, John the Baptist has important leadership qualities we need to learn from.

3.2.1.1. Be a Promoter and Focus changer

One of the most destructive things in the relationship between the existing leaders and the emerging leaders is criticism and unhealthy arguments. This leads to unnecessary conflict and affects the leadership transition. Because of it, the growth and health of the church will be at risk and will go through unexpected split and division. As an existing leader to be an advocate for the new coming emerging leader is the best way of building a bridge between the leaders to have an effective leadership transition. This is one of the very important leadership tasks for the existing leaders.

In the beginning of the New Testament ministry we see John the Baptist, who is the last prophet of the Old Testament. After he saw Jesus he pointed to him and said the following: “The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! This is He of whom I said, ‘After me

comes a Man who is preferred before me, for He was before me. (John 1:29-30). Many people were coming to him and followed him, when the leader came he turned the people's focus to the next leader. He was being very intentional by drawing attention to the one who would succeed him.

For that matter he was preparing himself and the people for the new Leader and for the leadership transition. That is why he said; "He said: 'I *am* 'The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Make straight the way of the LORD...John answered them, saying, 'I baptize with water, but there stands One among you whom you do not know. It is He who, coming after me, is preferred before me,'" (John 1:23-27)

John was prepared for the coming of the new leader who comes after him; and when Jesus came he effectively transferred his leadership responsibility effectively. His disciples became Jesus' disciples. The existing leader, John, magnified and introduced the new emerging leader by saying: "whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose." (John 1:26). Be the advocate of your successor, what a great thing will be done.

3.2.1.2.Be Joyful and hopeful

God is always a God of great things. The Bible says: "The glory of this latter temple shall be greater than the former,' says the LORD of hosts." (Haggai 2:9) When John the Baptist saw Jesus he was very happy and joyful. Instead, I see jealousy and the spirit of competition between the existing leaders and the emerging leaders. Whenever God raises and brings to us a new leader it is a blessing from God and a provision to advance His mission. There is a saying "When God loves the nation He gives the leader; when God is angry at the nation He takes the leader." Getting good leaders is a gift from God, it is a blessing.

When John the Baptist saw Jesus he was full of joy and satisfaction. He saw himself as grateful and privileged. Of course, it is; because he was hopeful the new leader who comes after him will continue what he started in a better way and he knows that his labor is not in vain.

He continued expressing his joy and reverence for the new leader by saying: “He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom’s voice. Therefore this joy of mine is fulfilled. He must increase, but I *must* decrease. He who comes from above is above all; he who is of the earth is earthly and speaks of the earth. He who comes from heaven is above all.” (John 3:30-31).

This is the right attitude and biblical standard for the existing leaders towards emerging leaders. When Jesus testifies about John the Baptist He said: “Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist;” (Matthew 11:11). To have such attitude makes the leadership transition effective and successful.

In my view this is what we missed in the Ethiopian evangelical churches leadership and because of this the existing leadership missed many opportunities for effective leadership transition to advance God’s Kingdom and maintain a healthy growth of the church.

3.2.2. Jesus to the Disciples

In developing leaders and preparing for the effective leadership transition, planning and preparation are very essential. Jesus taught about the necessity of planning

in His word. I want to put Roberts discussion on the passages in relation to developing leadership and the transition in plan:

Effective pastors do indeed plan their work and work their plan. Jesus counseled his followers to plan. His parables about the man proposing to build a tower and the king expecting to engage an enemy focus on the need to count the cost. Somewhere in that process of counting the cost is the need for planning. One cannot imagine builder undertaking a project of any magnitude without a carefully laid plan including detailed blueprints. Obviously, the more important the project, the more important the plan. Yet, when it comes to leadership transition, pastors often fail to plan. For example, how many pastors who leave one church for another first set in place a plan of action for those they leave behind? How many pastors approaching retirement age have initiated a dialogue with their lay leaders about a successor? how many churches have a crisis transition plan to guide them if the unexpected happens, like the untimely death or disability of their pastor?⁶¹

Jesus as an existing leader was working intentionally to develop leaders and to transfer the leadership responsibility to the emerging leaders coming after him. The following important qualities seen in the life and leadership of Jesus are the guidelines in developing effective leaders to have effective leadership transition in a practical way. Jesus showed for his successors a clear example of what a leader looks like in practical.

3.2.2.1. Be a Servant Leader

The development and growth of emerging leaders into servant leaders inherently requires that the servant leader passes power on to them (sharing power), so that they can also grow in using that power to serve others according to the higher purpose.

Unless a leader has the servant leader's attitude and understands the leadership position he is entrusted with and is given to him as a steward, he is not willing to transfer to others. He will die on his chair. This is one of the problems that become hindrance for an effective leadership transition in many churches. Because of this it is fundamental as existing leaders and emerging leaders to study the servanthood leadership of Jesus Christ.

61. Terry Roberts, *Passing the Baton: Planning for Pastoral Transition*, USA, NavPress Publishing Group, 2015), 16.

Jesus is serving the purposes of God. We see the balance of servant leadership for a group in the context of preparing for and implementing succession.

One of the characteristics of Jesus' leadership is servant leadership. The question is what is servant leadership? According to Thorsten Grahn;

It is the focus on the growth of the individual, that they might flourish and achieve their full potential and not primarily the growth and potential of the organization, that distinguishes servant leadership from other leadership styles. The primary concern of the servant leader is service to their followers. In the secular business schools it was Robert Greenleaf who, in the early 1970s, proposed the servant leader model. However, the concept of a servant leader is not such a modern concept, but can be found in the biblical account of the life of Jesus Christ. By examining his model we can identify a Christ-centered, Christ-like servant leadership style that works for Christians who lead people in any situation.⁶²

When we see Jesus' life and ministry He is the model servant leader. Because: 1) He willingly submitted his own life for the benefit of others based on God's will. Jesus submitted his own life to sacrificial service under the will of God; He knelt down and prayed, saying, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done." (Luke 22:42 NKJV). 2) He sacrificed his life freely out of service for others. "I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." (John 10:17). 3) He came to serve. "The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." (Matthew 20:28); although he was God's son and was thus more powerful than any other leader in the world. Jesus demonstrates and transfers the real leadership in action. As followers and successors of Him this is what the disciples or emerging leaders need to imitate and transfer in their life and leadership to practice and make it practical.

⁶². Thorsten Grahn. <http://www.christian-leadership.org> Jesus: The Role Model for Christian Leadership on 08/11/2011, (accessed, March 2018).

The prominent passage that clearly shows Jesus' practical action to demonstrate serving others is found in John 13:1-17. Jesus gives a very practical example of what it means to serve others. He washes the feet of his followers, which was properly the responsibility of the house-servant. Examination of this passage shows four important points⁶³ 1) Jesus' basic motivation was love for his followers (v. 1), 2) Jesus was fully aware of his position as leader (v. 14). Before the disciples experienced him as their servant, they had already experienced him many times before as Master, and as a strong and extremely powerful leader. 3) Jesus voluntarily becomes a servant to his followers (v. 5-12). He did not come primarily as their foot washer, but he was ready to do this service for his followers if needed. 4) Jesus wants to set an example for his followers to follow (v. 14-15).

Thus, as the servant leader from the teaching and example of Jesus Christ we learn that being a servant leader in the most general sense means voluntarily being a servant, who submits themselves to a higher purpose, which is beyond their personal interests or the interests of others. And a leader who uses the power that is entrusted to them to serve others, a servant who, out of love, serves others needs before their own and, a teacher who teaches their followers, in word and deed, how to become servant leaders themselves. Such attitude and understanding makes the leader to feel as a steward and easily prepare for the transition to the next leader.

In addition to this, as Christian servant leaders applying these considerations of Jesus as a role model for Christian leaders we can see that, from a biblical perspective, a servant leader is a person, who is: Christ-centered in all aspects of life, which is a

63. Ibid.

voluntary servant of Christ, committed to serve the needs of others before his own, courageous to lead with power and love as an expression of serving, consistently developing others into servant leaders, and continually inviting feedback from those that they want to serve in order to grow towards the ultimate servant leader, Jesus Christ.

The biblical foundational principles for servant leadership are that the servant leader is a servant in all things in relationship to God. This is the Christian servant leader's higher purpose. His primary purpose in relation to people is to serve. Because Jesus Christ came into this world as God's servant (Isaiah 42:1, Isaiah 52:13, Acts 3:26, 4:27). He also came to serve man (Matthew 20:28). However, Christ did not come to be our servant, whereas he came out of obedience to God, serving him.

Christians are called to be God's servants in every aspect of our lives. From the Bible it's clear that this means serving fellow man in accordance with the higher purpose of serving God. Note however, that simply serving people is insufficient. It does not necessarily imply that a leader is serving God. It is possible, for instance, to serve people based on a humanitarian worldview.

There is a big difference between serving the needs of others and being a servant of others' needs. Serving the needs of others is liberating. It implies recognizing their needs without judging them, and then doing what can be done, in line with the higher purpose of serving God first, to help satisfy that need. Whereas; being a servant of the needs of others, requires that one must do anything and everything possible to satisfy those needs, whether it is in line with one's service to God or not.

The servant leader themselves is a growing leader, led and grown by the Holy Spirit. Jesus as human being was the one who never abused his power. Most leaders

abuse their power, this is particularly true in the current Ethiopian evangelical churches' leadership. The keys to avoiding abuse of power are feedback from God and from the followers, along with sharing power. These factors are necessary to help the leader apply power in line with God's purpose and for the good of the followers.

Servant leadership is more about being than about doing. Without a serving heart it is almost impossible to become a servant leader. A leader may need a conversion experience from the inside in order to become a servant leader. In any event, the highest priority should be given to help servant leaders to grow in their service to God. Out of the service to God, true service to others flows more easily.

If someone is already a committed servant of God and of others, they need to engage their leadership gifts to serve others as a leader with the right use of power and with love. Leadership skills training, continuous encouragement and feedback can support a servant leader in this growth process.

Someone, who is already a leader, but who wants to become a servant leader, also needs training, encouragement and feedback, but they need a conversion towards servanthood much more. This commitment must then be strengthened again and again. It is harder to learn to be a servant than to learn to be a leader, especially for those who have been senior leaders for many years. Because the Old habits are not easy to accept and change.

The servant leader must be a "learning servant" who wants to grow both as a leader and as a servant. Therefore, the servant leader invites feedback especially from God – through prayer, Bible reading, and communication with spiritual mentors – and from the people being served. One way to start a feedback process with the people being

served is simply to ask them how the leader can best serve them. Jesus was asking his disciples by saying, “Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?”, “But who do you say that I am?” Matt. 16:13,15. Ideally the feedback will be an ongoing process, resulting in the servant leader serving more effectively according to the actual needs of the people. In the process and application of leadership transition asking feedback and consult the people being served for the betterment and effectiveness of it is very important.

According to the Bible, to become a servant of God and to enjoy serving others is not only a decision that a person needs to take, it is first a gracious gift from God. More than this, because of our new nature, as Christian leaders we should find ourselves readily drawn to the Christ-centered servant leadership model. It is the leadership way of our role model, Jesus Christ, and as we see throughout the Bible, serving God essentially includes serving others in line with his good plans and purposes, not ours. Being a leader is to do God’s purpose in his own generation and transfer the same plan and purpose of God to the next generation.

There are three growing dimensions for a Christian leader that should always be maintain in life; as a voluntary servant of God, as servant of others, and as a leader. A leader who is a growing servant leader doesn’t have a problem with power struggle. For him it is easy to empower others and transfer the leadership responsibility to others when it is needed.

The story of feet washing shows the servant leadership of Jesus during the succession process with his small group of disciples. Jesus served God’s plan and mission while simultaneously serving his team of disciples as he prepared the team to assume their leadership roles in his subsequent absence. Therefore, it was concluded that Jesus

operated in a dual-focus of servant hood. This type of servant leadership may prove beneficial to organizations in a period of leadership succession.

When the actual leadership transition comes, the servant leader who is serving God's purpose and puts others first won't engage in a power struggle instead he bless' and authorizes his successor.

When Jesus was about to finish his ministry and depart from his disciples, Jesus scheduled a staff meeting with his disciples in an apparent effort to ensure the continuance of the group's operation. During the meeting, Jesus did something that was very challenging to the disciples. Just before the Passover feast, as the evening meal is being served he takes off his outer garments, puts on the clothe of a servant, pours water in a basin and begins to wash the disciples' feet. Hence Jesus, the group leader, dresses like a servant and subsequently performs as a servant. Very often this act of washing the disciple's feet is viewed as an example of the servant leadership of Jesus. However, this act and the discourse surrounding it reveals more than a solely gesture focused on the disciples, but also includes Jesus simultaneously fulfilling the purpose of God's plan. The dual-focus of servant hood involves both the mode of serving the group and also concerns the mode of serving the greater vision of the organization. One might say that in serving the organization, a leader will in turn be serving the people of the organization.⁶⁴

Jesus makes their relationship to each other an identifying mark that they are disciples of Jesus. Thus, the ability of the team to serve each other identifies the group with their leader Jesus. Leadership is essential to the success of a small group. Leadership

64. David Wright. <http://www.semanticscholar.org>, The Leadership of Jesus in the Succession Process of the Disciples: A Dual Focus of Servanthood in Small Groups Biblical Perspectives – May 2008 Regent University Virginia Beach VA, USA., (accessed February 25, 2018).

is the influence that moves a group to collectively accomplish stated goals. Leadership of teams and small groups is an essential catalyst of team effectiveness.

Jesus provides insights on leadership in the process of interacting with his team. The basis of Jesus' interactions with his team was founded upon relationships. It is within a framework of interpersonal relationships that he ministered to his disciples and others.

There is a need for the team to be informed and prepared for what is ahead as His successors. As the group leader, Jesus is assured of the fulfillment of his mission—all things having been given into his hands and that his hour had come (John 13:2-4). It is from this position that Jesus enacts the role of a servant and washes the feet of the disciples in a demonstration of servant leadership. The transformational leader is focused on the organizational vision while servant leadership is primarily focused on what is best for the followers.

According to what Jesus did in the foot washing, great leadership doesn't start with what he knows but it begins with a fundamental belief, a different motivation. The implication is that the very best leaders are driven, or feel a sense of calling, to serve.

Jesus taught and modeled servant leadership throughout his life. The gospels are filled with lessons on leading through service as seen in Matt 20:28; Mark 8:6; Luke 22:27; and John 12:6.

Jesus' feet washing found in John 13 as He performs an act of service as a living lesson. The act of washing feet before a meal was a task reserved for servants or more likely slaves. Servant leaders often do things that may seem less than leadership. In other words, servant leaders, at times, act in ways that are out of the norm. This is probably why Peter had such a hard time with the idea that Jesus was performing as his slave. Yet,

Jesus washed the disciples being fully aware of his authority. There are times when it is appropriate for the leader to step back from the leadership position. The passage discloses that it was from a position of power and authority that Jesus humbled himself.

In the transition stage, preparation for the future is incorporated and serves as a guide to the disciples once their leader is gone. Successful or effective succession planning is not merely leader replacement but a comprehensive blend of identifying competencies that are needed, identifying and developing members, and developing teams.

Jesus is about to transition out of the leader position and allows the disciples the opportunity to lead themselves. A carefully designed succession management strategy can fail because of a flawed execution of a plan or for failing to plan. The placement of all things or all authority into the hands of Jesus from the Father; Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come forth from God, and was going back to God. John 13:3 Even as Jesus has his Father's approval, he now turns to his disciples. Jesus put on the garments of a servant and washes the feet of his team.

Later, in His last prayer in John chapter 17 Jesus gives a report that he has finished the work assigned to him. Continuing with the prayer to his father in it 17, Jesus also reports that he has essentially passed on the vision to the disciples and asks that his disciples or team would continue in the graces of the Father into the future even as Jesus had experienced. Jesus demonstrates the balance of service between the group and the vision.

As a leader, it is implementing the process of succession he or she must be attentive to for the continuity of the organizational vision as it transitions from leaders.

As inferred, the stability of vision and purpose are found in the development of people and the establishment of systems or process.

The servant leadership of Jesus has a planned dual-focus. The leadership of Jesus had a follower focus towards his team of disciples, and a simultaneous focus towards the plans and processes of God. The purpose and plans of God include the development of the shared leadership of the disciples to further the gospel. They are so close that as Jesus serves in the leadership of the team, he is simultaneously serving the fulfillment of God's plan (John 13: 1-3). Hence, the dual-focus of servant hood is manifested.

This final event was an intimate time between a leader and his group. He personally took time washing and drying the feet of each member of the group. Subsequently, they ate the meal and had fellowship together. Additionally, the foot washing served as the group leader's model of love and service. It provided an example of how they should live in the physical absence of their leader. Finally, the foot washing signaled the succession of leadership with its authority and responsibility to the group of disciples to serve.

3.2.2.2. Be Humble

Jesus' invitation for leadership is to take His yoke and to learn from Him. "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart," Matt. 11:29. What is the lesson the leaders need to learn from Jesus? Humbleness; His humility is from the heart, from the inside.

The Bible clearly stated how Jesus humbled himself: "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a

bondservant, *and* coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to *the point of* death, even the death of the cross.” (Phil 2:5-8).

Neither sacrificial love nor forgiveness is at all possible without the same humility that compelled the Lord of the universe to take on human flesh, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross. We as leaders are commanded to have that same mind. Not only washing feet, He humbled himself until the death of the cross for the benefit and serving of others.

This is the lesson leaders need to learn and transfer to the emerging leaders, so that they can act and think “in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.” (v.3).

After Jesus’ obedience for humility, God the Father exalted him above all. As it is written; “Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth...” (v.9-11).

As we have seen in Jesus’ life God rewards humility. The right way to come to leadership position for the service of God and others is with humbleness. As it reads in the Bible: “Before destruction the heart of a man is haughty, And before honor *is* humility.” (Proverbs 18:12). This is one of the biblical instrument that prepares and develops emerging leaders for the responsibility of leadership task given by God.

In leadership transition the humble heart waits for God and gives priority for others until the fullness of time comes to promote and appoint him in the designated

leadership task. So as leaders we have to learn this from our role model Jesus Christ, as He invited us to do so.

The Lord sent an angel to Gideon to tell him about the leadership task ahead of him and Gideon replied, “So he said to Him, “O my Lord, how can I save Israel? Indeed my clan *is* the weakest in Manasseh, and I *am* the least in my father’s house.” (Judges 6:15). This is the voice of humble heart.

In my opinion this is one of the problem of emerging leaders in our context, lack of humility. Because of their proud attitude and focusing on the leadership position without humble spirit many of them directly create conflict with the existing leaders. This affects an effective leadership transition and also God never honor such attitudes, rather He hates it.

3.2.2.3 Be Example

Jesus’ gentle warning to the band of followers gathered for the Last Supper was “as I have loved you, so you must love one another” (John 13:34). His was the supreme example of showing what love means. While He was suspended on the cross between life and death, and on the point of a completely transformed world, Jesus prayed “Father, forgive them for they know not what they do” (Luke 23:34), Jesus demonstrated the real example of life and ministry for his disciples. Paul mentioned His exemplary life as a message echoed in Paul’s words to the Ephesians – “be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another as God in Christ forgives you” (Eph. 4:25).

As Wilkes raised the question of “How can everyday men and women adopt the leadership of Jesus? He was, after all, God! How do those of us who know our true selves lead as Jesus did?” These are not only the questions of leaders, these are every Christian’s

questions and arguments. The author didn't stop here, he continued and said; "we can lead Jesus' way only when we obey his teachings and examples. It begins by becoming servant to the Servant Leader. That relationship will yield both mission and vision for our lives."⁶⁵

While He was on earth Jesus was obedient and showed exemplary life to his followers. As the Word of God said in the book of Hebrews Jesus' obedient was not because He was divine; but He set an example of obedience for every follower of him. "... though He was a Son, *yet* He learned obedience by the things which He suffered." (Hebrews 5:8).

3.2.2.4. Appoint and Authorize

After training and preparing his disciples for the leadership responsibility ahead of them, Jesus commissioned and authorize them to fulfill their task. "And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age." Amen. (Matthew 28:18-20). He appoints and authorize his successors for the leadership responsibility. Appointing without authorizing is difficult and impossible to accomplish the leadership task. This one of the problem of the existing leaders in some places, particularly in the Ethiopian evangelical churches.

65. Wilkes, 22.

Authorizing is the sign of trusting and having faith on the successor. When Jesus made the actual leadership transition to the disciples, particularly, we see He clearly authorizing Peter on His flock and gives the full responsibility.

Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, *son* of Jonah,^[b] do you love Me more than these?” He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.” He said to him, “Feed My lambs.” He said to him again a second time, “Simon, *son* of Jonah,^[c] do you love Me?” He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.” He said to him, “Tend My sheep.” He said to him the third time, “Simon, *son* of Jonah, do you love Me?” Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, “Do you love Me?” And he said to Him, “Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You.” Jesus said to him, “Feed My sheep. (John 21:15-17)

We all know Peter’s story, he denied Jesus; but after he repent and returned Jesus never regretted authorizing him. This is one of the challenge for the existing leaders not to trust their successors because of their previous weakness or failure. We all have weakness and shortcomings, remember how God trust us and as Paul said; “because He counted me faithful, putting *me* into the ministry, although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy,” (1Timothy 1:12-13). It is by His grace and mercy we are granted such a ministry.

The existing leaders need to lift up and encourage what they see as weakness and trust their successors for they will learn from their mistake and do better things.

This will encourage and motivate the new leader to work faithfully and accomplish the leadership task. So in effective in leadership transition one of the very essential thing is to appoint and authorize the successor to fully do the leadership task accordingly. In Jesus’ last prayer He was reporting what He did on the emerging leaders who are his successors by saying: “As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.... And the glory which You gave Me I have given them,” John 17:18,22).

The commissioning and authorization He did for his successors was as it was done for him.

One author wrote the following important point about how Jesus' delegation seems like and the necessity of authorizing the emerging leaders.

Responsibility must be paired with authority. Jesus, however, did not share only his responsibility; he also shared his authority. Responsibility without authority disables rather than empowers followers. If you say, "Please help by doing thus and so, but don't make any decisions without checking with me," you have not empowered the person; you have enslaved him.... More authority and fewer responsibilities help persons grow forward in their leadership; less authority and more responsibilities help persons develop passive behavior." Jesus remained steward of his Father's mission, but he enabled others to carry it out by sharing his authority with them.⁶⁶

For me this is one of the things the existing leaders always forget. We forget how God and our predecessors trusted and did for us. No one come to the leadership position or responsibility just by himself. There are people, former leaders, ultimately God authorized and invest on us. So trusting and authorizing the emerging leaders is one of the basics in effective leadership transition.

3.2.3. Paul to Timothy

Paul fathered his son in the faith, so Timothy would be prepared to succeed him. 'You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. (2Tim. 2:2)'

In fact, Paul left his apostolic leadership to Timothy in no uncertain terms: "I'm passing this work on to you, my son Timothy. The prophetic word that was directed to you prepared us for this. All those prayers are coming together now so you will do this

66. Wilkes, 182.

well, fearless in your struggle, keeping a firm grip on your faith and on yourself. After all, this is a fight we're in." (1Tim. 1:18-19 MSG). Paul as an existing leader or predecessor, he effectively transferred his leadership to an emerging leader Timothy.

From this leadership transition we learn very important biblical principles for the development of emerging leaders and for the preparation of successors to have an effective leadership transition in the church.

3.2.3.1. How to recruit and select the successor

As an existing leader before the time of leadership transition happens leaders need to prepare for it. One of the preparation is select and recruit the successor. Paul recruit Timothy and took him with him. "Paul came first to Derbe, then Lystra. He found a disciple there by the name of Timothy, son of a devout Jewish mother and Greek father. Friends in Lystra and Iconium all said what a fine young man he was. Paul wanted to recruit him for their mission," (Acts 16:1-2 MSG). There are two important points mentioned here used as a qualification to select and recruit Timothy for the mission. a) He is a disciple: when Paul went Derbe it says "He found a disciple", which is the follower, learner of Jesus Christ. Timothy was the disciple and follower of Jesus Christ. In selecting and recruiting leaders this is very fundamental and qualification of a good leader. Before leading and teaching others the leader needs to be a follower and learner of Jesus Christ, the Master. Chuck Miller in his book titled *The Spiritual Formation of Leaders* said:

Jesus' classroom for leadership development is one of relationship with Him and transformation by His power and His presence in our life through the Holy Spirit. This dynamic learning paradigm involves relationship, transformation, Christ being in control, and remarkable outcomes.

By being with Jesus, we become more like Him, our gracious Master who extends understanding and grace to each of His students.⁶⁷

b) Others testify about his life: In recruiting and selecting emerging leaders their life testimony is very important. Especially what other faithful believers say about the potential leader. Other brothers said about Timothy the following testimony: “all said what a fine young man he was.” (Acts 16:2 MSG) Having the genuine life witness about the potential leader’s life and his relationship with others is very important. After Paul heard the testimony of believers about Timothy he recruited and took with him.

One of the qualifications of leadership selection listed in 1Timothy is: “Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside,” (1Timothy 3:7). In selecting and recruiting the successor having a good testimony for the emerging leader is very essential.

3.2.3.2. How to Develop the successor

After recruiting and selecting the potential leader the following task will be to develop and equip him with different types of training and experience sharing. Paul continued to develop Timothy to grow in life and leadership responsibility. He showed in real life what being a Christian and a leader means through what he did. Most importantly being a Christian leader is being a follower of Jesus Christ. Paul repeatedly explains to Timothy about the attachment of his personal life with Jesus Christ. Because the primary call and responsibility as a Christian leader is keeping the life abide with Christ. “Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be

67. Miller, 41.

evident to all. Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.” (1Timothy 4:15-16)

Because of their busy schedule and focus on ministry many leaders are so careless about their spiritual growth and daily devotion with God. I know a lot of ministers who are exhausted and drained in ministry, but have no time with the source of their life and ministry power, Jesus Christ. Later on that makes them to be weak in their faith and leadership as well. That is why Paul repeatedly hammer his successor, Timothy, to focus on his source and deep rooted in the truth.

“Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. I urge you in the sight of God who gives life to all things, and *before* Christ Jesus who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate, that you keep *this* commandment without spot, blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ’s appearing,” (1Timothy 6:12-14).

He was teaching him very important lessons on what Christians and emerging leaders need to know. That is why in his letter Paul reminds him what he learned while he was with him. “But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me, ... you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned *them*,” (2 Tim 3:10-11).

To develop the emerging leaders these two ways are very helpful; modeling before others and teaching the sound teachings of the Word. Paul reminded Timothy to imitate the manner of life, longsuffering, etc. he saw with Paul and the doctrines or teachings he heard from him.

Even as a successor Paul warned to not compromise the truth of God. In leadership transition this is one of the most important point that should be taking care of

in the life and ministry of the emerging leaders and the coming generations. Even though leaders are changed, generations come and go, the truth of the gospel is always unchanged.

I charge *you* therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the word! Be ready in season *and* out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, *because* they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn *their* ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. (2Timothy 4:1-5)

The disciples traveling to Emmaus said about Jesus: “The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people,” Luke 24:19. In His preparation of the disciples Jesus was using these two ways, deed and word, to develop them. He showed them what the real life looks like as followers and ministers and also the living standard as a Christian and as a leader.

The problem the Pharisees’ had was the contradiction between their word and their deed. According to Jesus’ comment on Pharisees and Scribes he condemns the disharmony between their deed and words so He warned the disciples to not follow their deed. “Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, *that* observe and do, but do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do.” (Matthew 23:3 NKJV). In developing the lives of others the harmony of deeds and words are very important.

One of the challenges of the emerging leaders is focusing on ministry and being careless about their inner life growth that shapes their character in to the likeness of Christ. Because of that the leaders’ character becomes far from how it is supposed to be. Clinton in his book wrote:

At the heart of any assessment of biblical qualifications for leadership lies the concept of integrity—that uncompromising adherence to a code of moral, artistic, or other values that reveals itself in

sincerity, honesty, and candor and avoids deception or artificiality. The God given capacity to lead has two parts: giftedness and character. Integrity is the heart of character.

An emerging leader becomes aware of the importance of integrity through integrity checks. An integrity check is a test that God uses to evaluate intentions in order to shape character.⁶⁸

The harmony of these two things, deed and work or character and giftedness, are very essential in developing emerging leaders and to have effective leadership transition in the evangelical churches in Ethiopia. In my opinion because there is lack of the role models in life and leadership in the church, it leads to the existing leaders to lose credibility. For this reason the growth of the emerging leaders and the transition of leadership between generations is highly affected.

3.2.3.3 How to Encourage and Follow up

The other important things that makes for an effective leadership transition between an existing leader and emerging leader are encouragement and follow up. We see this in the life and ministry of Paul and Timothy. “You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.” (2Timothy 2:1) Such encouragement motivates the emerging leaders to do more and grow in their faith and leadership skill. When an existing leader encourages the emerging leader it pushes the emerging leader to submit and more near to the existing leader. Even if the existing leaders makes a critical comments, if it starts with encouragement it is easily accepted by the emerging leaders. Encouragement creates the sense of caring and loving.

Most of the Epistles to Timothy are full of encouragement and clearly shows Paul’s follow up and concern about the emerging leader Timothy, his spiritual son.

Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attention to reading,

68. J. Robert Clinton, *The Making of A Leader: Recognizing the lessons and stages of leadership development* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1998),58.

to exhortation, to doctrine. Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership. Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all. Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you. (1 Timothy 4:12-16)

His encouragement and follow up was until the end; even after he became the leader/pastor of the church Paul continued his follow up and encouragement to his successor. “I charge *you* therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the word! Be ready in season *and* out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.” (2 Timothy 4:1-2)

Such healed and renewed mind set between the existing and emerging leaders is fundamental in the relationship between the predecessor and successor in the church leadership. Spiritual father-son relationship mentality between the existing and emerging leaders is the source of effective leadership transition and for the growth of a healthy church.

Many predecessors once they hand over the leadership to their successor they want to discontinue their relationship with the leader as well as the congregation. I think this is not healthy. It even makes me to raise a question; was the transition healthy and effective? If so why stop the follow up? It is very essential and helpful. Mullins said:

A lot of guys I know pulled back from their relationship with other pastors and leaders after their transition. they stopped hanging out with those they had associated with previously, because they don't feel as though they have anything in common anymore. This is mistake. There is no greater time of needing those friendships and relationships than during a transition. you need to press in and engage those leaders in order to stay relevant and better able to relate to the upcoming generations of leaders. Those relationships will help you identify with the needs of younger leaders, so you know how to add value and connect on their level.⁶⁹

69. Mullins, 144.

The wisdom and the experience accumulated throughout the years in the life of the former leaders is very helpful and necessary for the successors. On the other side the successors need to connect themselves with their predecessors to consult and ask advice for the advancement of God's kingdom. It is very important and useful.

Chapter 4

Research Findings and Analysis

In this research I am using qualitative methods. Because examination of the processes of succession and the nature of the proposed research questions favored a qualitative approach. Since this study attempts to holistically describe what is going on and to build a knowledge base for developing theory rather than test hypotheses, the methodology adopted sought to maximally allow for unforeseen discovery, description and explanation. Historically, qualitative methodology has been considered most appropriate in the exploratory phases of a research subject. More scholars, including those in the leadership field, are now recognizing that qualitative methods offer the opportunity for significant insights regardless of the phase of research. The intersection of leadership and succession is a research subject in its exploratory phase. Qualitative methods offer the opportunity to examine a range of social phenomena.

Qualitative researchers are interested with the complexity of social interactions as expressed in daily life and with the meanings the participants themselves attribute to these interactions. This interest takes qualitative researchers into natural settings rather than laboratories and fosters pragmatism in using multiple methods for exploring the topic of interest. Thus, qualitative research is pragmatic, interpretive and grounded in the live experiences of people.⁷⁰

70. Catherine Marshal and Gretchen B. Rossman Designing qualitative research: (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Pub., 1999), 2.

4.1. Research Findings, Discussions and Analysis

In this research I used two ways to address the subject: first, sending the questionnaires through emails to the pastors in Ethiopia and here in the USA to the selected and good representatives of the existing and emerging leaders of the evangelical churches of Ethiopia. From about eighty-five selected representatives of the Ethiopian evangelical church leaders about forty-seven people answered, which is about 55%, and replied to me. Second, I interviewed some of the most popular and well known existing and emerging leaders face to face. For example at the end of March I travelled to Atlanta to meet and interview three well-known Ethiopian pastors, one from the old generation who served for the past thirty two years and the other two from the new generation. Our discussion was incredible and eye opening.

For both questionnaires and interview questions I have prepared the questions in two languages: English and Amharic (Ethiopian language), to help them to understand the subject and explain it without any language barrier. After I collected their responses for those who answered the questions in Amharic I translated to and summarized in English. I divided the responses in to five categories according to the relationship of questions and the content as well as the flow of the responses.

In the following five categories I put the responses and comments of the interviewees and questionnaires by if their response is in English directly writing, and if their responses is in Amharic by translating in to English. So all the responses and comments from number 4.1.1. to 4.1.5. is directly from the responders.

The responses and comments in these questions are from different existing and emerging leaders as I put their representation and numbers in the above. Some responses

are similar and repetitive when this happens I tried to correlate the responses and put in a sentence or a statement. These all findings are related with the Ethiopian evangelical church leaders.

4.1.1. Effective leadership transition is the neglected subject

Under this category I put the responses and comments to the responses for the following questions: What in your view is effective leadership transition? Do you think there is effective leadership transition in the church? If not, why? What do you think has influenced many church leaders' decision to hand over responsibility to other emerging leaders? From 47 of the responding leaders 10 of them, which is 21%, have answered that the leadership transition in the Ethiopian evangelical churches is neglected.

The response to the practice of the leadership transition in the Ethiopian evangelical churches is not good. Transition of leadership in Africa is difficult as compared to other parts of the world. Because leaders think they are there for life. There is no effective leadership transition.

The responders to the interviews and questionnaires which I mentioned above agreed the effective church leadership transition in the Ethiopian evangelical churches is one of the very important topics, but we never work on it.

According to the responders effective leadership transition is not maintaining the status quo. However, effective leadership transfer is primarily related with transferring noble spiritual values from one generation of leaders to the new breed of leaders; such as the evangelical tenets i.e. restoring the *sola scriptura* (the Scripture alone is final authority), Christo-centric message (the proclamation of the crucially of substitutionary

death of Christ for salvation), Repentance as response for the gospel (focusing on the conversion of individuals), the cruciality of Church as a community (edifying the new born in the local church i.e. those who accept God as their father should also be serious to take church as their mother), focus on the Lordship of the Holy Spirit (without the Holy Spirit no one has the ability to surrender to Christ that should be emphasized).

Second it is also the transfer of material assets that enhance the day to day activity further mission of the church. When those two elements are transferred in balanced fashion, such kind of leadership transition is an effective leadership transition. It is the transferring of leadership responsibility, vision, mission from the former leaders to the new leaders in a peaceful way. It should be done by believing in the emerging leaders and sharing responsibility and encouraging the emerging leaders to lead. It is the influence of the leaders in life and ministry to follow them and began to lead others.

Effective leadership transition should be intentional and pre-planned to train and mentor a person with leadership potential. Encourage emerging leaders with potentials to get stronger and prepare themselves for higher responsibility. Live in servant leadership style to show by example.

Effective leadership transition is a transition which builds the bridge without creating any havoc or gap and transition where you don't see major difference and conflict.

It should be done by training and showing the ways how to do things knowing and understanding the need of transition then gracefully, peacefully training, develop, accept and exit; that is peaceful and effective transition according to the findings.

When we say there is effective leadership transition, the existing leaders prepare and equip their successors to replace them and continue the ministry in a better way and without any interruption.

According to the responders responses they don't think there is effective leadership tradition in the church. The reason mentioned by them is, there is lack of understanding what leadership and effective leadership transition means. Besides, there seems to be people who think everyone is equal. In our tradition, it seems there is gap and lack of trust, which makes leadership and its transition less effective

"I don't believe in the Ethiopian Evangelical churches leadership", said one of the existing pastor; whose eldership is changing within two years. One person said "if you want a person to be a healthy person don't make him elder." When they become elders something will come up on them and I don't know what it is. One thing I know is the church belongs to Jesus. When Christ calls somebody as a leader He wants that person to lead His church. The vision must come from the Lord. Even if there are elders they should apply the vision given to the leader.

In one of the responders' case he received a vision and told the elders. Praying how to apply and make the vision practical is the job of the elders. God never led through committee, never spoke through committee. Whether we like it or not God calls only one person as a leader even for a nation. MacDonald and Pizza Hut are led by one person; a leader is very important says the responders.

Based on the research findings and the respondents comment most of the Ethiopian church pastors are not supposed to be pastors. Some of them want to be a pastor because of their personal egos. If a person is really called to be a pastor, he will

have a vision and then elders and administrator will support him and all things will function peacefully. The pastors must know their time is limited.

According to the responders in the interviews in Ethiopian churches they don't believe there is peaceful and effective leadership transition. Because the elders may change every term, it may be peaceful but not effective. Effective leadership transitions glorifies God. That is what a peaceful and effective leadership transition is. If it is not glorifying God, how can it be peaceful or effective? Leadership transition is everywhere, even in politics, regions, but effective leadership transitions glorifies God. We don't see that in the Ethiopian churches.

According to the findings there is peaceful leadership transition but not effective transition. The transition from committee to committee might be peaceful that doesn't mean effective.

According to the research the main reasons mentioned as the cause of the absence of effective leadership transition in the Ethiopian churches are: the absence of exemplary leaders who can inspire us as an example to follow and see, no competitive leadership in the churches, and lack of a standard for effective leadership.

In addition to these, there are other reasons mentioned in the findings; first, the existing leaders don't want to prepare others and transfer the leadership. Second, there is fear of insecurity of losing position. Third, most of the existing leaders are not servant leaders. Fourth, they don't trust the emerging leaders.

In the group or eldership leadership there is peaceful transition when they finish their terms, but in the pastoral leadership we don't see effective leadership transition.

There is lack of knowledge and maturity about leadership and believing in others to transfer the leadership responsibility.

For the question what do you think has influenced many church leaders' decision to hand over responsibility to other emerging leaders? The responders continued and said, there are several factors that negatively influenced the smooth transition of leadership. It could be summarized in two outstanding elements according to the majority of the responders: First, the incumbent thinks that no better leadership will come that assures the continuing line of the gospel. If the existing leaders pass on the mantle they think that the gospel message will be compromised. Therefore, they choose to cling to power and make a case for their grab for power. Second, the incumbent thinks that the new blood will expose their weakness and diminish their influence, therefore, they choose not to transfer power to maintain their reputation. Therefore, suspicion in its various forms are the elements that influences the decision of leaders.

Most leadership transitions takes place because of pressure and push from others and not because of the leader's willingness or driven by a vision. As one of the respondents said, "I don't take it as influence in the case of Ethiopian evangelical churches, rather as push and pressure." If we agree in this premise, the reason for handing over responsibilities is a) pressure from young generation to take over because of hidden motives, b) old leadership being overwhelmed by new demands which may be difficult for it to meet, c) church conflicts that have drained the old generation leaders (tired), d) not caring for self physically that has spilled over in physical sicknesses and phase out, that may have been preventable. In general, many of the old generation leaders may have been overtaken un-aware (my perception) of the latter.

Probably the dynamics of the society change. The society has been growing and the dynamics together with the technology era, should have influenced. It should not be death, immorality, problems, failure, and revolution. It should be preplanned vision. It should be the vision and by preparing and to see the better leaders. To see his fruits to lead and work His work.

The main reasons for the existing leaders or old generation leaders to hand over leadership to the new generation should be the expansion of God's Kingdom, because the harvest is plenty (Mat. 9:36-38), it is the will of our Lord Jesus Christ (Mat. 20:28), God always raises leaders to lead his people in their generation (Acts 13:36), and God's Kingdom work is through replacement (2Tim. 2:1-2).

Existing leaders transfer their leadership responsibility when their power and leadership capability becomes weak. When they face leadership crisis they hand over their spiritual leadership responsibility.

4.1.2. There is no good relationship between existing and emerging leaders

For this finding the responders answered the question of how is the relationship between the old generation leaders and the emerging leaders in the church. On this question from the forty-seven respondents thirty of them, which is 63%, gave almost similar and related ideas as follows.

As far as the relationship between the old generation leaders and the emerging leaders in the Ethiopian church there is discrepancy and misunderstanding. Even if we can't expect that there is always absolute and perfect system, in Ethiopian current situation there is big misunderstanding. There is tension between old and new leaders.

But the tension is minimized in civilized society. Generation gap always exist and the only escape from the negative influence is by establishing transparent system.

Currently, there seems to be gaps in understanding each other. The old generation leaders say the new ones lack commitment and perseverance, while the new generation leaders often comment that the old do not have new and bright ideas thus cannot walk at their pace. This is evidenced by putting old leaders to retirement.

The fact is that the new could not have existed without the old. The new generation need to understand that faith fathers have played their role in their capacity in their own generation and have passed the Gospel to the new. It needs to understand that there is wisdom to listen or mine to; there is an experience to be gained from them (old generation leaders).

The old also need to understand the new generations' culture is energetic and fast. It needs to understand that there is a wealth of resources to capture and mobilize as they walk together for some time.

Overall, there is a need to interweave, inter-support, learning from each other, mutual respect, etc. as they flow in same river course, some to depart a certain loci earlier. As one of the respondents said; "I believe that effective succession is possible if generations can flow together with love."

Because of the gap, the emerging leaders don't seem to learn, listen and take wisdom from the older leaders. On the other hand, the old doesn't seem to trust, delegate and give authority to the emerging.

The relationship is not satisfactory. There are two reasons: 1) the existing leaders don't have self-confidence. 2) the emerging leaders have over confidence and don't like

to listen to the existing leaders. For example in the Bible Samuel was submissive to Ali; but the emerging leaders in our context they are not willing to listen and learn from the existing leaders. It is very important for the emerging leaders to do so. Culture is always dynamic. The existing leaders need to update, communicate and address the young generation.

The relationship between the existing and emerging leaders in the Ethiopian churches is not good now; because the emerging leaders are not raised under the leadership of the existing leaders. This is the existing leaders fault missing the opportunity to build the relationship from the beginning. After years of negligence even if the old generation leaders try to correct themselves it is too late because they didn't develop the mentor-mentee relationship.

Because the existing leaders didn't develop and a healthy relationship between themselves and emerging leaders, there is big gap in maturity, doctrines and views. Due to the gap, they complain to each other, they create a lack of respect and love, rather than helping they hurt each other, and generally they develop enmity among them.

4.1.3. The absence of readiness for the existing leaders for transition and don't know how to prepare their successors

For this part I summarized the responses of the following four questions: How can leaders prepare others for leadership and have leadership transition? In your opinion, how can peaceful and effective biblical leadership transition be realized in the Ethiopian church? How can existing leaders identify emerging leaders? When is the right time to hand over the responsibility for the existing leaders to the emerging leaders?

Almost 50% of the responders, responded the existing leaders are not ready for transition and active in the preparation of their successors. To prepare the emerging leaders as successors the existing leaders need to prepare themselves for that. Leaders can prepare others by setting a good example. Although good leaders have managing skills, they are primarily role models. As Edmond Brook said, “example is the school of mankind” good leaders prepare others by affirming others whom they mentor.

Affirming the potential leaders and setting the stage for them towards assuming their present role leaders are multiplying themselves. Leaders who are aiming at preparing others don't consider their mentees as rivals. Therefore, they do everything they can to equip their mentees. That way they prepare their successors.

Intentionally encouraging preparation for another profile; mentoring with love without fear of losing position. One of the respondents put his belief as follows; “I believe we can prepare others for leadership by delegating authority, being an example, training and mentoring.”

According to the respondents the emerging leaders should be the disciples of the existing leaders. The one who replace the existing leader must know how the leader lives and leads. After that he will take responsibility to build and develop his own personality, approach and way. By being exemplary disciple of Jesus and the leader then will become a true leader.

According to the respondents the unfaithfulness and lack of commitment in the emerging leaders makes the existing leaders reluctant to give up their position.

According to the findings vision should not be limited in the leader's time and ability. The vision must be measured beyond the leader's time and age. The leaders'

vision size must not be limited on their size. It should be transferable and continuous to the next generation as well. Once the leader has that kind of vision he has to have an institution to develop leaders for the accomplishment of that vision.

“For example,” said one of the new generation leader interviewee, “I have a training school, to develop missionaries to plant churches, and leaders to lead churches. You cannot get a developed leader in one day, you have to produce and train many leaders from the church members. If the church leader in any case cannot continue or present in that church he has to have others to replace him and continue the ministry. Every church should have an institution to produce leaders.”

According to the respondents comments when a person comes to the church for the first time we have to be ready to prepare him as the next leader. One of the interviewees gave an example as follows: “When you go to the British royal family everybody born of the family is prepared for being the prince and princesses. We have to prepare our kids in the Sunday school for leadership.”

In every department every leader must produce and prepare at least three or four leaders under his leadership. No one department leader is allowed to be the only leader, he is expected to have other leaders under him. The leader must think whoever comes to the church he has to prepare and have an atmosphere to train others for leadership. To give responsibility and see their potential.

If he moves, one of the potential leaders is immediately ready to replace the leader. Not only the top leaders the department leaders also must prepare and produce the emerging leaders under their leadership.

When we think about leadership transition and preparing the leaders we always think the lead pastor, but the preparation of leaders must be in every department of the church. It also starts from the house. So to replace the leader it is good to start from the bottom, and then to the inner circle. The leader has to have an oath for the next leader. There should be a clear structure in the church how to develop leaders in every level.

As more than half, which is 55%, of the respondents commented the way to develop and prepare the successors to have effective leadership transition in the church, is by believing in the emerging leaders and leadership transition. That is by being pleased in the emerging leader, by identifying the gift and talent of the emerging leaders, have a definite reason and purpose, and grant the specific place and authority for the emerging leaders. In addition to these it is also important being an example in life and ministry. (1Cor. 4:14-17, 11:1, 2Tim. 3:10-17)

To prepare the emerging leaders follow 2Tim. 2:1-3; faithfulness, full of grace, and who accept the true Word of God and taught it. And also who are submissive and learn under their leaders. To prepare the emerging leaders identifying in prayer and start to pray with them, then build a relationship with them and also continuing teaching, equipping, sharing responsibility and correcting them in love when they make a mistake.

To make the effective leadership transition practical in the Ethiopian churches the leaders need to: 1) Identify persons in ministry that have a potential in leadership, 2) Make a purposeful assignment of strong leaders as mentors for each, conduct purposeful leadership training for emerging leaders, 3) Be a servant leaders example holistically, 4) Trust the succeeding generation for responsibility and hand over, 5) ordain in public according to the comments of the findings.

When we see the transition of the leadership from Moses to Joshua, we learn that Joshua was working under Moses. The people of Israel only wanted God to be with Joshua and they will follow him. So there was a peaceful transition. In this case, a leader is someone who is appointed by God.

Before all thing the Ethiopian church leadership theology needs to correct. There is a problem in our leadership theology said the one responder. The eldership theology is a confused and unbiblical theology. If that isn't corrected in the Ethiopian churches it is hard to believe there will be effective leadership transition. This can be corrected thru education and training. The place of the pastor and the place of elders needs to be corrected according to the Bible.

The place of elders in the church is to apply the vision of the church which comes through the leader of the church, not to bring vision. God brought the vision through Moses. God has a specific place for the leader.

"I'm not saying the leader or pastor should be dictator; he is the servant, even for the elders. So elders must support the pastor and apply his God- given vision." Said one of the responders. According to the comments of the respondents: the elder in the Bible were full timers. Most of the elders in our churches are bread winners. They don't have time to pray even for themselves, let alone for the church. Elders should have time to pray, to teach, and to visit.

The existing leaders must understand they are not in the leadership position forever. So they have to start to find their successor and develop. Likewise the emerging leaders need to respect and prepare themselves to learn from their fathers. Like Samuel

was respecting Ali and obeying him. In general respect each other and avoiding hatred from both sides is very important in developing effective leadership transition.

In their comment the responders continued the following recommendations. To identify emerging leaders the existing leaders must apply the biblical standards in practice. The existing leaders can select potential leaders using scriptural criteria's. Scripture clearly outlined the elements that the congregation or leaders should observe in the life of the leaders to be. These are connected to the person's life in different areas of relationships. (check 1 Tim 3:1- 7)

According to the responders the summary of their comments in those areas of relationships are listed as follows for identifying leaders: 1) The leader in terms of the church relationship: the person who needs to assume leadership responsibility in the church should be well informed about the members he/she needs to lead. Further needs to have the ability to relate with them. Further, should have the ability to guide and teach as well. 2) The family relationship: Family is the base that a leader demonstrates his/her leadership gift. If there is failure in the family that might negatively impact the leadership. Therefore, in the process of identifying leaders this factor should be considered seriously. 3) The personal life: there should be qualities in an individual that commends the individual to the larger responsibility. The potential leaders should thoroughly have scrutinized. 4) The relationship in market place: the person who doesn't exemplify scriptural values in the corporate world will bring disgrace to the body.

Therefore, leader's identification process needs to include the potential leaders in the society; a) Through participating to different ministry departments leaders can

identify those who have potential and confidence, b) take intentional retreats for those who have potential, c) give assignments and make follow ups.

By giving responsibility and a chances to serve, then after that identifying them by their commitment. The person who has burden for ministry and leadership you will see him always in the church; by cleaning, praying, being on time. Give them responsibility and you will identify the real leader there.

Train a bunch of leaders and you will filter from that. Until you get the main leader you train many leaders and you will find and filter your successor. His faithfulness, character, commitment. Even Samuel were tempted, to appoint the wrong person. Even if we believe leadership is inborn, through the process you will filter and know the leaders. So it is better to train and equip many leaders. After training many of the emerging leaders and assigning them you will pick the top leaders from them.

The leaders are selected from many. This will keep you to not miss the God given leaders. It is like a pool and find the leader from there. Jesus had five hundred, then one hundred twenty, twelve and then three top leaders. It is the best way to identify the leaders or successors.

First the existing leaders need to change their attitude towards the emerging leaders. Then they have to understand the biblical basis of leadership transition and leadership accountability. After that they have to focus and begin on selecting and developing emerging leaders.

To find the successors the Bible study groups, home cells, different ministry departments, choirs, training centers are some of the places. Examine their burden and

interest in the process of discipleship programs, and if the leader invests his time with the members and minister it is easy to identify the potential leaders.

For the question of when is the right time to hand over the responsibility for the existing leaders to the emerging leaders is dependent on each existing leaders said one respondents. There are clues for transferring responsibility from one group to another in society (different individuals are allowed to drive at a certain age). In the same way when the criteria's to assuming leadership role are met in the lives of a leader, I think that time is the time where transfer is reliable. The critical time is the time where assuring continuity is assured.

There is no right or wrong time; It is kind of phase out and phase in; 1) At first those in leadership position act as if they are heading the walk, 2) Emerging leaders lead together as if older ones go beside them, 3) Older leaders give more responsibility of leading while they stay in team and as if they are falling behind or following, 4) Emerging leaders given full responsibility while older generation leaders go for wider ministry or advisory role.

The right time to hand over responsibility is when the church is at stable situation, when there is no any tension in the church. Besides, the existing leader has worked hand in hand with the emerging one for some time.

There should be preparation ahead of time in training and preparing the emerging leader. After he is well prepared, appoint the well-equipped leader by saying this is the man, the leader and at the same time acknowledging that he is my leader too.

The existing leaders must allow the emerging leaders to begin to run beside them before they hand over the leadership baton. After that before they exit the emerging leader will take the responsibility and run the leadership.

“The example of handing the baton during the race doesn’t work for me, to transfer the leadership” said a seventy years old pastor, who had been pastoring for the past thirty two years. If the example works in the church leadership transition my time was five or six years before, when I was at my pick and I had potential. One of the reasons for not passing the leadership responsibility is insecurity– when you retire it doesn’t mean you quit ministry. There are so many ways to serve the Lord. To be a leader or a servant you don’t have to be just the leader of the congregation. Being insecure is being in flesh.

The transition should be step by step or phase by phase not all at once, just as Moses did with Joshua!

Many leaders exit suddenly, which creates confusion to the congregation and the rest of the people. To avoid such confusion the exit must take place step by step.

Life is in phases. For example a leader may serve as a senior for the first 10 years in church, 10 years in bible school, 10 years in counseling and training others...etc. Exiting may be from specific role not from all ministry. Let the leaders practice exiting in different levels.

There are times to be in the senior leadership position, God always led the leaders to the place where they would become fruitful and He never uses them and then leaves them behind. If the leaders listen and follow His will, God has always a better place for them. When He wants to move us, it is because He has arranged another more fruitful

place for us. All we have to do is trust and follow Him. God will always have a better place for us as long as we follow him.

It is promotion not demotion when God moves us. God is pleased in humility. We have to be pleased when God raises emerging leaders thru us. This is an opportunity to show our humility to God.

If a leader has a father-son relationship with the emerging leaders, it is not hard to make the transition. But if the relationship is a lord -servant relationship it is hard to leave the position because the existing leader will never see the emerging leaders as potential future leaders. If the leader sees the emerging leaders as sons he will invest his time and energy on their growth and their inheritance.

The existing leaders should not transition suddenly or accidentally; they have to show their successors how things are done and how to lead so they can exit step by step.

On the other hand the existing leader must prepare himself as well as his successor to hand over the reign any time after preplanning and investing enough effort as well as time. In all these God's timing is very important. Unfortunately the practicality of this truth in Ethiopian evangelical churches is not seen in many churches and leaders life.

4.1.4. The existing and emerging leaders are not doing their responsibilities

In this fourth category the responses to the following questions are organized. In leadership development what is the responsibility of existing leaders and emerging leaders? What does the understanding of spiritual leadership and servant leadership has to do with practicing effective leadership transition? In what ways has the leadership

created problems in the church in relation with effective leadership transition? Do you have any recommendation to solve the leadership transition problem?

Concerning these questions 20 of the forty-seven respondents, which is 40%, commented the leaders inability to fulfill their responsibilities to achievement an effective leadership transition.

In leadership development and applying effective leadership transition both existing leaders and emerging leaders have responsibility. The responsibility of existing leaders for developing potential leaders is primarily mentoring them. There should be mentor- mentee relationship to develop potential leaders. Scripture gives us numerous examples: Moses to Joshua, Elijah to Elisha, Jesus to Apostles, Paul to Timothy etc. see those models of mentor-mentee relationships.

The responsibility of the existing leaders is planning and intentionally investing on the emerging leaders. They must invest on their Knowledge, leadership skill, Christian life and prayer on to the emerging leaders.

The responsibilities of emerging leaders is to be eager to grow. The emerging leaders need to receive and the existing leaders also needs to be ready to give. Give and take.

In both sides there should be a mechanism of trust building, flow of communication, development of mentorship. Training should also be part of this mechanism.

Existing leaders needs to gather the emerging leaders and tell them their successes and failures. They have gone thru many things in their life, thus the existing leaders must impart their vision of success and even shortcomings into the emerging leaders.

The existing leaders can prepare seminars and write books to share what they know. They have to write their stories. They have experience, we need impartation. Open the institution. Using Facebook. To release what they have. Write books. Adding Leadership concepts in the Theological institutions. Because there is no leadership principles in Theological institutions most theologians are not learning leadership so they are not aware of how to lead. So it is better to have leadership in the Theological institutions.

The existing leaders need to be pleased in the emerging leaders and begin to mentor and share their knowledge, experience, to upgrade their skill and ability. Work hard to equip them to lead in a better way.

The emerging leaders should submit themselves under the existing leaders and learn and listen to their teaching, advice, and wisdom to train themselves. Emerging leaders need to be careful to judge the existing leaders, even if they have weaknesses, we need to recognize and respect them.

Before the leaders come to the position they need to learn about servant leadership. Because the principles of servant leadership and understanding what spiritual leadership are fundamental in the experience of spiritual leadership and effective leadership transition.

The concept of leadership particularly servant leadership is basically one of the very important in spiritual leadership. Leadership is bringing significant impact in the sector where the leader is responsible to lead. Leadership is impacting followers. In my understanding servant leadership is leading people by example i.e. by serving the need of others. Leaders in most part of the world are Lord over the people. When they lead they

are expecting to benefit from their position. However, servant leaders are just the opposite. That is why some say, “Leadership is not Lordship.” In fact, Servant leadership is leading people by Christ like model. Leadership is showing a way.

It is showing a way with humbleness; bowing down to serve even to the extent of washing feet for followers. Leadership in a simple word is to influence, to bring impact on others. A servant leadership, is to lead someone or a group of people by being servant. It is to be the opposite of being boss and dictator.

Leader is who listen and learn from God and transfers to the coming generation. Servant leader is a person who has the revelation of Christ, Christ dwells in him and revealed Himself through him. He is the person who transfers God’s mercy, love for others. The person who is truly a leader is supposed to be a servant. Real leader’s mark is his service for others. If I’m a leader I’m supposed to be a servant. The Lord Jesus said I came to serve not to be served. The true mark of a leader is to be humble and serve others. If we want to be served by others it is worldly and being carnal.

Leadership knows God and Leads the people to God. It must have a specific purpose, vivid vision and a strategy so it can lead the people to their destination by effectively using human and financial resources. Servant leadership is one of the leadership styles. In the church and spiritual case servant leadership is the best. For the purpose you want to accomplish by serving others by following Jesus’ example. You can accomplish your purpose but what are the ways you are using. Servant leadership is by serving others not for the benefit of the leader. Leadership is who has the vision and the strategies to accomplish the visions. Servant leader is a servant, humble, who is example for others for the benefit of others. It is inborn, inbuilt. Servant leadership is in built in the

life of the leaders. For the servant leader to hand over his position and exit is easy; because he knows leadership is for the benefit of others.

In what ways has the existing leadership created problems for the church in relation with effective leadership transition? There are numerous ways that the existing leadership can create problem to the church; the following three are the outstanding ones. First, lack of knowledge is one of the negative forces that hamper effective leadership transition. Many could be gentle leaders and may be able in many ways. However, gentility and ability without gospel centered spirituality is stupidity. Second carnality is another disturbing element in leadership. It has its own numerous forms. To mention some nepotism, favoritism, etc. Third, the influence of dark powers another element that disrupt, dismantle and defeat the efforts of the church. In fact the devil is taken for granted in western society.

Self interest in craving for power and glory; dogmatic in own views, giving more value to man created structured constitutions than the Biblical truth of acting in love. Top leadership of denominations loosing balance; siding factions instead of playing reconciliatory role. Not showing concern and care for younger generation when busy fighting each other.

As leaders lack of proper communication, lack of sharing the vision, and delegation problem. On the other hand by not seeing yourself as leader which brings lack of responsibility. Instead it always falls on the group; these are also issues that create problems in leadership and in transition.

If the existing leaders don't listen, don't care about the young generation and emerging leaders they will find another ways to fulfill their personal interest by splitting

the church. Other times we the existing leaders try to fulfill our interest, not the people's interest. For example, if the people's interest is education and we focus on music it creates difficulties in the church. To be honest most of the problems in the Ethiopian churches are because of the leaders.

As a recommendation the leaders of the Ethiopian evangelical churches need reserve the evangelical tenets i.e. restoring the *sola scriptura* (the Scripture alone is final authority), Christo-centric message (the proclamation of the crucially of substitutionary death of Christ for salvation), Repentance as response for the gospel (focusing on the conversion of individuals), the crucially of Church as a community (edifying the new born in the local church i.e. those who accept God as their father should also be serious to take church as their mother), focus on the Lordship of the Holy Spirit (without the Holy Spirit no one has the ability to surrender to Christ that should be emphasized) Finally practice Activism (the Christians should call the society to born again experience both in words and deeds) People should help needy in Christ love.

Mainline denominations need to reflect on where they are standing with regard to the Gospel and discipleship making. They also need to evaluate how effective they are serving the young generation. Moreover, they need to evaluate their relationship with new emerging churches, be open for dialogues without being bossy and not forcing emerging churches to lose their identity.

The responders suggest leaders have to be simple and have to have an attitude of servant if we want to impact others. Besides, leaders have to always work hard to produce leaders, by involving themselves in mentoring and training others. Besides, if

leaders of various churches try to work together, and develop on working relationship among each other's, the gap can be narrowed. Trust must also be build.

The church is not earthly institution, it is heavenly. So to lead and serve effectively the leaders must submit themselves to the Holy Spirit. If the person or the church is not committing themselves to the Holy Spirit, their leadership isn't effective. A call is very important, if God calls the leader He works through that leader even for His name sake. Even if that leader becomes weak God works through that leader for His name sake.

All existing leaders in the Ethiopian churches must learn in the next two or three years what leadership is. Leaders should sit down and think, learn, and study what to do as leader. Because the existing leaders are leaders because of many reasons. Some are leaders because there is no other leaders in place and others are leaders due to a revolutions or because they were there first; so existing leaders need to study what effective leadership means. Travel and ask successful leaders. Ask through their books, interview them, and ask them. If you are a church planter ask the successful church planters. If you are a leader ask a successful leader. Let us take a lesson from them. Some of us just become a leader. We have to know the church business and its function. Let us study the biography of successful leaders.

The Bible says in Pr.24 "wise learns from the fool" (MSG). Learn from the successful is being wiser. To start good leadership we have to learn from others. There are successful leaders but they didn't replace leaders effectively; because of that their ministry totally disappeared.

4.1.5. The absence of effective leadership transition and it's consequence

In this category I summarized the responses of the following questions. Do you think effective leadership transition between generations have direct relationship in transferring the gospel for the next generations? How? What do you think about the leadership transition in the Ethiopian Evangelical church today? What effect has the leadership had on the message of the gospel in this nation? As a leader how can you keep the balance of character and giftedness in your life and ministry to influence the emerging leaders? On these category twenty seven of the forty-seven respondents, which are 57%, are responding about the consequence of lack of effective leadership transition.

According to the respondents effective leadership transition between generations have direct relationship in transferring the gospel for the next generations. Effective transition between generations has to do with the gospel. There is direct correlation between the gospel and spiritual leadership. The spiritual leadership must have the gospel at its core. The church exists to do mission and evangelism. The church focus in fulfilling its mission relates to notifying the unsaved and edifying the saints. This is basically the package of the gospel. The Church leadership that doesn't focus in disseminating gospel message misses the vital cause of its existence as leader. There is no other noble cause than the gospel to the leaders of the church.

The church exists to disseminate the Gospel and make disciples. We cannot talk of church leadership without the Gospel. If there is failure in the Gospel one can say there is failure in effective leadership. If there is failure in making disciples one can say there is failure in effective leadership transition, too.

If the old generation share their strength and weakness to the young ones in a proper way, at the same time if the emerging wanted to learn, and be mentored and willing to listen it is impacting the next generation through our message. If such kind of relationship built, the gospel transferring would be smooth and effective.

In spiritual leadership transition there is grace that need to transfer to the coming leader. In the secular world there is nothing to transfer, just the techniques; but in the church there is great thing that should be transferred.

If you don't transfer the gospel with the zeal as a leader to the next generation you are distorting the truth. The leadership needs to impart the proper gospel message. Effective leadership transition has a direct impact and relationship to the next generation. Who can take over the next generation leadership? We have to transfer the gospel with the right kind of leadership.

If there is no effective and peaceful leadership transition the message of the gospel will be distorted. Lack of effective leadership transition in the Ethiopian evangelical churches leadership is creating negative impact in the society and generations to come. The root cause of many conflicts and crisis in the church is the absence of effective leadership transition. Because of this the exemplary life of the leaders is at risk and gives distorted image of the gospel to the next generation. It has big impact in spreading the gospel and expanding the kingdom of God.

The leadership transition in the Ethiopian Evangelical church today is full of chaos. Because of lack of the biblical and effective leadership transition between generations from time to time the evangelical leadership lacks firmness in the land. In the name of tolerance and peaceful co-existence evangelical ideals are not strictly observed.

The evangelical tenets are dismantled little by little. Family values, the authority of the Scripture and the crucial role of church for nurture and balanced growth is questioned. At the middle of this external pressure the leaders are silent. The effect of such prolonged silence at the face of horrendous external pressure is weak leadership and diluted message of the gospel. When vital elements in the evangelical tenets are compromised and or minimized then that results in weak message that produces weak church.

Leadership in the Ethiopian evangelical churches today seems to have lost the fervent vision for the Gospel. Fading of the vision for the Gospel looks evidenced in the focus of structure building (non-vibrant institutional, construction, etc.). There is misunderstanding between mainline churches and newly emerging independent churches (seems jealousy and fear of losing members). The young people are transferring to or joining the new emerging churches.

The message of the Gospel has lost power especially in the mainline denominations because of the above reasons. On the other hand, the newly emerging vibrant churches which have focus on Gospel and miracles are being persecuted by the mainline denominations; even if the newly emerging churches and leaders have problems in their teachings and practices.

In the leadership of the Ethiopian evangelical churches today is not as strong as supposed to be. As the majority of the respondents assured the lack of proper training and education has impacted negatively. Besides, the love of power and the misunderstanding of the members on leadership are some points that impacted negatively in the leadership. If we would have effective leaders, the message of the gospel would have been much more effective. Since we don't see cooperation and working together among many

leaders, we see Gospel is hindered. The absence of effective leadership transition in Ethiopian churches causes the loss of credibility of the gospel message and the leaders' life.

When we see the Ethiopian evangelical churches leadership, it is disappointing. We don't see leaders grow and come to leadership, because the Ethiopian churches leadership is eldership. One of the responders strongly comment by saying "I hundred percent don't accept the Ethiopian eldership system and it is not biblical." said one of the respondents. Because of it the leadership has impact on the message of the gospel in this nation. It has a great influence in the gospel work, because most of the time elders never have concern on evangelism. They just talk and take much time about finance and unnecessary things.

When God punishes He doesn't give a good leader, if he likes he gives a leader. Ethiopian Evangelical churches need new leadership styles. The current leadership is not right. In Ethiopian Evangelical churches the current leadership is changing with in four years. There is no visionary who continue the vision of the church. Every local needs visionary leaders and who can have ability to accomplish the vision. The vision of the church is changing whenever leaders change; there should be the continuity of the vision. The church should not be always the place of exercise for all new leaders. There should be the transition of ideas and visions.

The division among the existing and emerging leaders is one of the obstacles for the expansion of God's Kingdom. It leads the emerging leaders to split the church and began to compute the existing leaders; rather than planting churches and expanding the mission together.

Many leaders become self-centered and serve their own needs rather than leading people to follow Jesus Christ and making them Disciples of Christ, many leaders are making people their disciples and followers; and many others are running to have the name and position than serving the Lord and others. Rather than connecting hand to hand and transferring the leadership to the next generation leaders keep the position until the end.

To influence emerging leaders to follow as their successors the existing leaders need to influence in character and charisma. The greatest tragedy in the modern church is superficiality. Charisma without character is disaster. To avoid such disaster and develop the habit of leading balanced life in both words and deeds, we need to be persons of integrity. I strongly believe that outward expression is the result of strong inner conviction. In short living a life of integrity is the mark of balanced life. Integrity is defined as inner values accompanied with outward action. If a person develop integrity he or she will be balanced. I will strive to develop a life of integrity. Then I can influence others to follow and imitate me.

The genuine hidden life of a leader is a foundation for manifestation in public ministry with Charisma or gifts. A leader should have integrity in personal life and public life, too. There needs to be one person with regard to character. This is only possible by closely living with Jesus and learning from him. “I often remark in trainings I deliver ‘Live with Jesus before ministry’”, said the respondent.

According to the findings it is believed both should work hand in hand. Character without charisma could be a solid building without any design or without any fruit inside.

On the other hand, giftedness without character, is a car without a brake. Every leader always has to work hard on his character to maintain the balance in life and ministry.

Service is a being gifted; when you stay in service it is a character. Charisma or gifts will bring me to the pulpit, character will keep me in the pulpit. It is very important. May God gave us a leader who has ability and character. If a leader have ability and not character it doesn't help. Character is very important. These two must go together. If God calls a leader he must grow in character. If the leader grows in character the charisma will also grow.

It is possible to improve both of them. Charisma also is not by birth. In fasting and, prayer you can develop, improve your charisma in many ways, but if you don't have character it is useless. Like baseless house. Pr. 25:4. Now church leaders lost character, not charisma or giftedness. So back to the origin. The church leaders needs to work on character. We need to work more on character. When we see these prophets or emerging leaders in Ethiopia, they have charisma, but they are in their old nature. There are leaders who are working on character. We have to have the assembly of character and charisma together.

As an existing and emerging leader the balance of both charisma and character should be kept in the life of a leader. These are the two sides of a coin. Whatever gift and skill has the leader without character it is useless. To have effective leadership transition these two elements need to develop in the leaders life.

To develop the character of the leader needs to feed himself God's Word daily, fellowship with other believers and ministers and always abide with Christ.

As a godly church leadership practicing church discipline and disciplining those who are practicing unbiblical practices and teachings is also very important in developing and correcting leaders' character. Before doing leadership or ministry focusing on personal life, living a holy life, family and marriage life, and learn how to wait God must be the value of a leader.

4.1.6. Terms Repeatedly used in the research findings that need more explanation and focus

Through the questionnaires and interviews of the selected good representatives of the evangelical church leaders of Ethiopia they have discussed and responded their own understandings and observations as I put above. From those findings I want to discuss and analyze the following terms and ideas with more explanation. The following important points raised by the interviewees and questionnaires repeatedly and I want to clarify and explain to understand its value and significance in relation with leadership transition.

4.1.6.1. Peaceful transition vs. Effective transition

In the Ethiopian churches the most dominant leadership style is eldership, which means the collective of leaders in the church is the gathering of elected elders. These elders always has terms of service. The duration of the term is depending the local churches, some four years others three years. After they serve their term some peacefully replaced by others. Such transition looks like peaceful but not effective leadership transition. Because it is not pre-planned, and with preparation for leadership. So that it is not to work and accomplish God's will, but to continue their ideas.

Others may continue in position for long period of time. In some places and churches they are dictators and they seems they are the owners of the church and control every activity in the church. It is very difficult for emerging leaders and visionaries to exercise leadership under this leadership. And also effective leadership transition in such type of leadership is unthinkable.

Even if the elders team leadership is very important to support and help the pastor to fulfill his God given vision, the church needs a full time equipped and trained pastor. As the leaders the pastor also needs to prepare and equip the emerging leaders for the next generation. That is when the effective leadership can be practical in the leadership to continue the vision to the next generation.

There is lack of training and education about leadership and transition. Peaceful leadership transition doesn't mean always effective leadership transition.

In the secular world leaders shaking hands to be politically correct. I remember years ago the leaders of Israel and Palestinian were shaking their hands, but they were fighting each other. Likewise in some places the leadership transitions from one group to the other seems peaceful, but there is no real vision connection or love between the leaders as well as development in the ministry. Specially if the leadership change is between groups or committees, it seems peaceful but not effective. Because most of the time the decision maker is the pastor.

For example in the Ethiopian churches context there are two kinds of leadership styles: pastoral and eldership leadership. In the pastoral leadership there are elders or deacons who can assist and support the pastor's vision, but mostly the decision maker is the pastor. On the other hand there is eldership leadership, which is most of the main line

denominations use. In this leadership the vision, plan and decisions are made by collectively and even if there are pastors they are one of the elders. Without the elders approval the pastor cannot do anything. Mostly this is one of the causes of conflict and splitting between the existing and emerging leaders. Because the pastor doesn't have the right and power to replace other pastor even if he wants to leave or shift to other ministry, it is the elders who decide or search the pastor. Such kinds of leadership always create obstacles for having effective leadership transition.

For these kinds of church leadership my recommendation is to think about the importance of effective leadership transition and understand its benefits for the growth of the church and for the expansion of God's Kingdom. One of the reasons of the churches dying and being stagnant is because of lack of visionary leaders. So the church needs to develop the emerging leaders from the inside and embrace them with love and share responsibility by trusting them. If all the emerging leaders and the younger generation leave the church it is dangerous for the continuation the vision of that church.

Just because the elders are changed when their terms end doesn't mean there is effective leadership transition. Effective transition includes new dimension, new motivation and new energy which addresses the generation's need according to the fulfilment of God's will. When God calls the person to lead his people He has a specific vision to be accomplished. So the church needs such a leader as Mullins wrote who received the vision from God. "Nothing takes the place of getting in front of God yourself and letting Him birth what He wants to do in your church. Don't let committees give you the vision. God gives it."⁷¹

71. Mullins, 111.

4.1.6.2. Self-appointed leadership vs. God-called leadership

When we see the Ethiopian evangelical churches leadership as I confirm from the research, some leaderships are not leaders with a spiritual and biblical qualification. Some are leaders because of their personal ego and some are leaders because they were the first in the place to act as a leader, after that when gifted leaders came they are not willing to transfer the leadership.

Because of it there are many leaders who are disqualified and incapable to lead and develop other leaders as well. Those self-appointed leaders contradicts with the will of God and become sometimes killers of the vision as well as visionaries. Like Joseph and his brothers. Such motif and people make the church leadership full of chaos and fruitless. Even if the leadership try to act as a God-appointed leadership practically it is not. For this reason there is no developing and equipping others for ministry and leadership to transfer their leadership effectively.

4.1.6.3. Peak time transition vs. on Declining transition

In some leaders understanding and knowledge the inevitability of leadership transition is well understood. But their timing is wrong. Because of that the existing leaders assume the right time for the leadership transition is when they are tired and unable to continue their ministry. Such attitude and understanding is one of the challenge and obstacle for effective leadership transition in the Ethiopian evangelical churches leadership.

An effective leadership transition should be happen at the peak season of the existing leaders; before the growth and development of the church declined. That is what effective leadership transition is. This will help the successor to continue with a better

speed and also it helps the existing leader to change the gear and continue in ministry for the benefit of the church.

4.1.6.4. Character vs. Giftedness

In the Ethiopian evangelical church leadership one of the existing problem is lack of integrity and character in the life of the most of the emerging leaders. Their marriage and family life, their faithfulness in relation with money and sexual purity is at risk in many leaders' life.

The spiritual gifts and God's call for ministry doesn't give guarantee for the approval of ministry. The complaint heard from the existing leaders about the emerging leaders is about their character and faithfulness. As an existing leaders it is difficult to transfer the leadership to those who are not demonstrating the Christian character in their life. The call and the gift needs to combine with the changed character in the life of the leaders.

As Jesus gave an example about the wineskin and the wine in Matthew 9:17 "Nor do they put new wine into old wineskins, or else the wineskins break, the wine is spilled, and the wineskins are ruined. But they put new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved." Both character and giftedness must combine in the life and ministry of the leaders.

4.1.6.5. Leadership success vs. Transition success

There are many Ethiopian evangelical church leaders who are successful in their leadership. In some churches the continuity of their success was stuck because of their

poor or none preparation for the successful leadership transition. After they passed away or left the ministry the growth of the church declined.

The continuity of the leadership success is measured by the success of effective leadership transition. So it is fundamental for the existing leaders to work hard not only for their leadership success and also for the successful and effective leadership transition for the continuity of successful ministry.

4.1.7. Positive effects from the research

Even if most of the findings indicate the negative and the undone aspect of leadership transition, there are some positive feed backs about my study on leadership transition.

Almost all of the people I have interviewed and questioned appreciate about the topic and it was an eye opening for most of them. The first positive comments was the push from some of the pastors to translate into Amharic (Ethiopian language) this research and findings to use the guidelines and the material as a manual for the training and use of it in the Ethiopian churches.

In addition to these some of the interviewees suggested to use the public and social medias: such as television, radio and Facebook to be interviewed and create awareness to the leaders in the church of Ethiopian evangelicals regarding the necessity of effective leadership transition.

4.2. Data Analysis

In order to find out the impact of the subject matter within the areas of finding, the findings will be evaluated in two parts. To find out the subject matter in this research mainly used the qualitative research and to evaluate the responders' status regarding their educational level, age, biblical knowledge, leadership experience the researcher used the quantitative findings to determine on the subject matter. This part is meant to evaluate the kind of people who gave whatever responses have been given; their understanding of the subject, their knowledge of the functioning of the system, their biblical knowledge of the subject matter, their educational levels and their ages of maturity. This is to test the profoundness or intensity and impact of the reason on the investigation. The data analysis table is in the Appendix B.

Conclusion

Effective leadership transition is one of the greatest instruments in the success and growth of the church, particularly in the evangelical churches in Ethiopia. As existing leaders and emerging leaders we have to work hard for the practicality of this biblical instrument effectively.

The existing leaders never quit to learn. We have to continue learning, if not, we will be outdated. We have to learn from God, through His Word, from God's men. When we continue learning our vision will continue growing. Even if our external body becomes weak, our internal life will be renewed and changed continually. If we do so then we began to pray for the emerging leaders, and teach them the truth to them. If a person stops growing he will die.

On the other hand the emerging leaders need to stop being proud and despising others, it is very dangerous. Rather listen and obey and be humble to serve. Always have a teachable spirit for both the existing and emerging leaders. After that they will be blessed.

We all are coworkers and partners in our Lord's farm, no one is lord over the other. We all are servants of the One Master. So let us hold hand in hand and expand His Kingdom. Let us serve His will in our own generations.

Chapter 5

Summary, Recommendations and Conclusion

This study has examined the leadership transition in the evangelical churches in Ethiopia, the impact it has in the healthy growth of the church and on the expansion of God's kingdom in the country. The purpose and central research topic for this dissertation is to study the dynamics, obstacles, positive as well as negative effects of transition, the stages or phases of transition in the lives of every leaders and its impact for the successful leadership transition. Because what is lacking in the Ethiopian evangelical church leadership is the biblical guidelines on leadership transition to prepare the existing leaders mind set as well as to give important guidelines how to prepare the successors and implement the actual leadership transition effectively and successfully in the church. Thus providing biblical and practical guidelines to help the existing and emerging leaders to think and prepare themselves for effective leadership transition by planning ahead of time and working on it to have a well prepared and equipped successor to forward God's kingdom with undistorted gospel message and image of Christ in the Evangelical churches of Ethiopia. This chapter will address the summary, recommendations and conclusion of the study.

5.1. Summary

The main focus of Chapter One was to identify the key problem, which is lacking the importance of leadership transition including planning, preparation and applying in an effective way in the Ethiopian evangelical churches between generations and neglecting its significance in relation with practicing effective leadership transition. To identify the problem the assessment of the historical background which means political, social, and religious aspect of the issue in Ethiopia is very important and it is done in the chapter.

Even if the problem and challenge of the ineffectiveness of leadership transition is worldwide the focus of this study was targeting the Ethiopian evangelical churches. The study was significance because it brings an awareness of the problem to church leadership so that the existing leaders and emerging leaders will begin to think about the measures that might be taken to address the issue. Since the study required field research, chapter one provided the research methodologies, how and where the research took place.

Chapter Two was a review of scholarly works on the subject with a main focus on the definition which means the transferring of leadership responsibility and task to the next leadership by planning, preparing and equipping the successor in an effective and peaceful way. To apply effective leadership transition the following principles such as planning, recruiting, training, empowering at the right time, having Christ-centered attitude by being Kingdom minded and other principles are discussed in the chapter, particularly for the effective leadership transition and its practicality in the evangelical Churches of Ethiopia. The Chapter also discussed the necessity of effective leadership transition between generations for the advancement of God's Kingdom and for the healthy growth of the church in different generations. In addition the Chapter covers how

the effectiveness of the leadership transition requires planning, preparation and careful application. The success of a leader is not measured in his leadership, but in his legacy of doing his work in preparing his successor and in the application of effective leadership transition is also discussed. The key principles of effective leadership transition such as: emerging leaders allowing God to work on our life and let Him finish His work, and as existing leaders understanding that leadership has a time limit, and as coworkers building a team spirit between the existing and emerging leaders are important points discussed in the Chapter.

Chapter Three discussed the biblical foundation and understanding of an effective leadership transition. One of God's character mentioned in the Bible is Leader, so the Bible is full of His leadership story by raising and working through many amazing leadership qualities, particularly the selected biblical examples in successful and effective leadership transition and the principles they used are discussed in the chapter. Planning, Preparing for transition, recruiting, training, empowering at the right time, having Christ-centered attitude, having team spirit between existing and emerging leaders, coaching and mentoring the emerging leaders as well as transferring leadership with blessings and authority are discussed in the chapter. Those who were successful and effective in their leadership transition are those who invested in their next generation, because of that their legacy continued and discussed as well in this chapter.

Chapter Four was about research findings and the implications of leadership transition in the evangelical churches in Ethiopia. The forty-seven responses from the questionnaires and interviewees of the emerging and existing leaders' comments and

answers were analyzed in the chapter. The awareness created through the questionnaires and the comments summarized in the chapter as well.

In general the following elements: calling, giftedness, character, commitment, cooperativeness, training, and communication are necessary for an effective leadership and for effective leadership transition. Before a leader comes to the leadership position he needs to know and understand his call and identify his gift.

On the other hand leaders need to have a Christ like character to lead His people in to His likeness. Such commitment and integrity plays a great role for the development of the leaders' personal life and to prepare others for leadership and transfer the baton for the next generation as well as leadership.

In leadership transition communicating the message to the next generation as well as assuring the continuity of God's work is the leaders' responsibility in every generation. Leadership transition without the concrete content of the gospel message is nothing. So in the leadership transition training the emerging leaders with the leadership skills and edifying them with the foundational truths of biblical teachings is very important.

Beyond the time limit of the existing leaders God's work is continuing to all generations to come. So that as leaders it is always good to prepare and make sure after our time ends the ministry we are doing now is continuing in the coming generations. For that preparing ourselves and others for effective leadership transition is very important.

Finally it is important to summarize with the following concluding points:

5.1.1. Having a Christian perspective on Effective Leadership Transition

As Christians and followers of Christ our leadership transition perspective needs to be based on the Bible. That is what makes us Christian and spiritual. As Christians we have to understand and realize the following points in relation with biblical and effective leadership transition.

5.1.1.1. Understand Leadership Transition without preparation will never be successful and effective

As I mentioned above transition is always happening, particularly the ultimate Head of the church is Christ so it will continue from generation to generation. So as leaders we have to prepare others and transfer our responsibilities to the next generation when our time has ended. When we see Jesus, He trained and prepared his successors for three and half years and He transferred the leadership on to them and they did great things with the power of the Holy Spirit.

By recruiting, selecting and preparing the emerging leaders and build a relationship with them before handing over is foundational for effective leadership transition. Because it gives a chance to learn, to mature in life, to experience the leadership responsibility step by step and to understand the core values and mission of the church. The preparation process is the time of laying foundation for an effective leadership transition in the life of both the existing and emerging leaders as well as for the church.

5.1.1.2. Understand the Inevitability of leaving leadership position

One way or another the existing leaders will leave their leadership position one day. It is better to understand the reality and the inevitability of this fact for the existing leaders ahead of time. Because it benefits the leaders, both the existing as well as emerging, the church, and for the expansion of God's kingdom too. Since the existing leaders know this fact he or she will prepare themselves for that time to exit peacefully and effectively.

God is the only all-time and in all places Leader, but we all are leaders in a specific and limited time under his provision. So it is better to understand our limited time and specific task in leadership and then develop others to replace us for the advancement of God's Kingdom beyond our time and limitation in a better way.

5.1.1.3. Work on the responsibilities for effective transitions

As an existing and emerging leaders we all have responsibilities for the reality and practicality of an effective leadership transition in our churches. The existing leaders need to embrace the emerging leaders to correct, direct, develop them in love and truth to the fulfillment of their God given leadership potential by equipping and sharing responsibilities step by step. No one is perfect and error less; so for existing leaders being patient for the emerging leaders when they make mistakes is very important. Leaders are not ready made, they are prepared and sharpened through process.

In addition to this, the existing leaders need to have a plan and readiness for working on the transition ahead of time. It helps to identify and prepare the successor for leadership in different responsibilities and to hand over the leadership when the right time comes.

On the other hand the emerging leaders need to do their responsibilities for the success and accomplishment of God's will in their life and ministry. The main problems the existing leaders have against the emerging leaders is that they do not listen and are not willing to learn or obey. The best sign of a good leader is his or her ability to also be a great follower. Because the best followers make for best leader. So it is the emerging leaders' responsibility to be a good follower, listener, learner and to obey the leaders. We will reap what we sow now. If we are obedient and respectful to our leaders we will have obedient followers. Samuel was obedient to his leader Eli; even if Eli was not an admired leader.

There are so many wisdoms, knowledge, experience and skills we have to exploit from the existing or old leaders for our benefit and successes. We can learn from their weakness, strength, failure and success. The old generation leaders or the existing leaders are the living treasure for the emerging leaders. We have to use them, it will smoothly expedite our growth.

We need spiritual fathers, counselors, advisors and mentors for the betterment and fulfillment of God's agenda in our life and ministry. We all are family, brothers and sisters under God's leadership. When we do our responsibilities as existing and emerging leaders it is easy to have effective leadership transition and rejoice in it.

If the existing and emerging leaders in the church work hand in hand the influence and impact in the society will be incredible. Because unity and love always have great powers in Christian life and ministry. "Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him. And a threefold cord is not quickly broken." (Ecclesiastes 4:12).

When our relationship is based on these biblical and spiritual instruments the message and life we are transferring to the society will shine and win others for Christ. This is the command we are commanded to do. “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” (John 13:34-35)

The unity and relationship developed among these two generations, the existing and emerging, will make the leadership transition effective and peaceful on its time. Not only this it also increases the credibility of the leaders among the believers and in the society in general. That gives power and influence when the church delivers the gospel message to the community.

5.1.1.4. Understand the necessity and reality of leadership transition

One of the writers mentioned three⁷² ways a leader can leave. “You can carry me out”, which is forcefully being avoided from the leadership position. The second one is “you can kick me out”, which is avoiding the leader with revolution and attack. Mostly these two happened in some places as a coup d’état, the leader pushed out forcefully. The third one is “I can walk out.” And he wrote his choice to walk out.

In one or the other way, through natural limitation, man-made situations or accidentally leaders may leave from their leadership position. Before these things happen the wise and matured spiritual leaders understand it and choose to walk out on the right time. As Christians and followers of Christ we don’t need to struggle for power until pushed out by others. That is the life style of the gentiles or worldly people.

72. Mullins 24.

We don't need to wait until we are unable to do things on the leadership position or until we have to be pushed by others to leave or even wait until we die. As Blackaby wrote: "Often leaders do not carefully consider their successor until they come to the end of their time as leader. Many leaders give little thought to the conclusion of their leadership and so they do little to prepare for it. However, when suddenly faced with leaving their office, they realize that much of their work will have been in vain unless there is a capable successor."⁷³ By any means there will be leadership transition, but understanding the inevitability of it and working on its effectiveness is very essential as follower of Christ. If it is real one day what are we doing for that day as leaders today?

5.1.1.5. Church leaders are ultimately accountable to God

The one who appoints leaders to lead His people is God himself. Sometimes peoples come to the leadership position because of different reasons; because there is no leader at the time, other individuals asked them to lead, etc. But the true leaders are a gift from God and they are send and appointed by God. The Holy Spirit came to the church in Antioch and said, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Acts 13:2. The responsibility and call to lead his people is given from Himself.

Paul clearly understood that his ministry's primary goal is to please God, not his personal ego or others, because he knew who put him into ministry or leadership. "And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting *me* into the ministry," (1 Timothy 1:12).

73. Henry & Richard Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership: Moving people on to God's agenda.* (Nashville, TN. Broadman & Holman Pub., 2001), p. 279.

We the Ethiopian church leaders need to evaluate and ask the following questions: Who assigned us to lead? Why are we in leadership? If we think and are sure that our appointment is from God we have to work to please Him and serve His people according to His will. “For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ.” Gal. 1:10.

He wants us to transfer His gospel message without distorting and multiply His disciples not ours. To transfer His healthy message to the next generation we have to work hard to prepare and hand over the leadership responsibility in our hand with great care and responsibility. We don’t need to be selfish and negligent about the next generation.

In this case one of the task we have to do concerning our responsibility as an accountable person is transferring the leadership role to the next generation or person effectively on God’s time. It is very essential. The existing leaders don’t need to wait until their ministry or the church declines because of their self-centeredness, and unpreparedness. Some of the leadership problems and conflicts in the Ethiopian churches are because of careless handling of preparing the next generation leaders and the ineffective leadership transition.

One day the Master Leader will ask how we act and do things in our time. For that Jesus’ example of the Talents in Matthew chapter 25 is a clear example that every leader is accountable in his leadership and ministry. So it is better to do the best of our effort to please God and fulfill his purpose in the generations to come. As the track runners hand over the baton while they are running at their peak time, we have to transfer our

leadership transition on the right time while the church is growing. This will help the next leader to take the growth and expansion with a better speed.

5.1.1.6. The true leadership success is measured by its transition success

This is one of the key areas most of the time leaders easily miss. Many leaders work hard for the success of their church under their leadership, but they don't think what will happen after they passed or leave the leadership. Because of that the vision of many ministries and churches collapsed after their predominant leaders left the position. One of the biblical example of this fact is Joshua; he was very successful in his leadership but he left the leadership without preparing and transferring the next generation leaders. Because of that we see the Israelites were scattered like the sheep without the shepherd and attacked and exploited by the enemies.

It is very important as leaders to think and answer this question: after my leadership what will be the legacy of my ministry and what will be the next generation's fate? Because it is God's kingdom not ours; His kingdom needs to continue beyond our limitation. So that facilitating for that continuity is our task as existing leaders. Equipping and preparing leaders that continues the work of God we are doing for the coming generation without quitting and distorting the mission and message. Such leadership success with its transition success is what real and effective in leadership.

5.1.1.7. Effective leadership transition is a promotion not a demotion

In some leaders mind when they leave the leadership position they see it as a demotion. In reality if it is a well prepared and planned transition it is a way to promote the existing leader to the wider ministry opportunities, than limit him to the local church.

He will be benefitting the wider Kingdom work through training, counseling, advising other leader from the experience and instil wisdom accumulated throughout his leadership time.

Whenever a leader faithfully obeys the Master Leader God uses the transition as a spring board to take the obedient leader into a bigger part of ministry. Because God is a God of promotion not demotion.

5.1.2. Having a Free Space in Leadership: Leadership Passing Lane.

One day I was driving to one of the Retreat Center in Palm Spring area in one Lane Street and other cars were following me; they were limited by my speed. I was stressed and curious about those followers, because if they want to pass me there is no way to go. Whether they liked it or not they had to follow me and I also continued to be stressed, because I assumed I blocked them. While I was continuing on my way I saw a sign of “Passing Lane ahead of you”. When I arrived in the additional passing lane I was assuming all of them will pass me quickly, but they all continued to follow me. Shortly the Passing Lane stopped. After that I felt comfortable and confident to continue driving in the leading place. After a while we arrived another Passing Lane, at that time one of those who were following me used that Passing Lane and passed me quickly. I was very happy for his passing me and the Passing Lane idea.

In that movement, the Holy Spirit spoke to me that the church leadership needs passing lane. In the Gospel of John: “Then Jesus said to the twelve, ‘Do you also want to go away?’” John 6:67 as existing leaders we need to have a check and balance system for those who are following us. Are they following because they are happy in our leadership

or are they just following us because there are no other options? It is good to open up and listen to their feedback. Why do we need it?

5.1.2.1. Creates transparency in leadership

In the church we are leading there are so many healthy and unhealthy comments; some of them told upfront some are not. Because of that we don't know what they are thinking and speaking in the back. So if we have times and ways to open up for Q&A or for discussion and hearing feedbacks from the members or other ministers in the church it will help the leader a lot. Some may ask to know more and others also give feedback for the betterment of the church. So it is always good to have such atmosphere; it gives the existing leaders peace of mind and confident in their leadership. Even though there are negative comments we have to listen carefully, because they are damaging in their nature.

Jesus openly asked the disciples "But who do you say that I am?" and Peter quickly answered: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Mat. 16:15-16; because of this question He clearly introduced himself for his successors. Now they know better about their leader and the Peter's response was helpful.

At the same discussion there was negative comment. In their following discussion Jesus began to tell His vision about His death and resurrection the comment He received was not encouraging; Peter said "Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!" in response Jesus said "But He turned and said to Peter, 'Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.'" (Matt. 16:22-23). As encouraging and helpful comments come from God there are comments from human mind and Satan which will hurt and needs careful attention.

Existing leaders must know to whom they are transferring their leadership baton. Such transparency and comments will also help the leader to identify the attitude and personality of emerging leaders and in some ways to correct and build up in the right way. That is what Jesus did for Peter; He rebuked and returned to the right understanding of the real purpose and vision of Himself.

5.1.2.2. Avoids damage and conflict

The idea of Passing Lane also helps to avoid damage and conflict. Anyone who wants to pass by on his way can go peacefully without damaging. Paul and Barnabas were serving together in the church of Antioch for some tomes. I think as an existing leader Barnabas was the leader of the team and Paul as an emerging leader was with him. In Acts chapter 15 Paul wants to go on his way because of Mark; Barnabas allowed him to take his own way and continue the mission.

As an existing leader Barnabas might have the right to excommunicate and report to the Apostles in Jerusalem about Paul's disobedience, but he didn't do that. Because the difference among them is not because of doctrines, moral failure or other major issues, it was just the difference of how to do things. This is one of the problems in the Ethiopian churches; if a person is different from us in doing things we accuse and excommunicate him from the church in public. There are so many accusations in the Ethiopian churches done by the existing leaders because of the emerging leaders is doing things differently than the existing leader. As Mullins recommend it is better to let the successors be themselves:

One of the more challenging obstacles you will face as a successor is the pressure to be like your predecessor. Be who God has called you to be and take things in the direction He wants to go. Be yourself and be true to who God has created you to be. It will save you and your people a lot of heartache down the road if you are authentic and transparent about your identity and gifts. Always

remember that God has called you to lead in this unique time in your organization's history. Never apologize for who you are; rather, stand confidently in your strengths, undergirded by God's enabling power.⁷⁴

It is good to have a passing lane atmosphere; if they are doing the mission in different ways than ours instead of letting them go. Because the harvest is plenty, but the workers are few. We as existing leaders don't try to put every emerging leader in our basket. Sometimes the person whom we develop and invested in will not replace us. God may need him another place. We have to be Kingdom minded. As far as he is in the mission field and under God's supervision it is sometimes good to let him go. The main thing we have to check is the content of the message and the life of the leader; other than that the ways how to deliver the message and where to do miniseries are always different from time to time and from person to person. That is why after years, Paul needed the help of Mark, whom he rejected in previous times. Because they all are in the same mission field and their difference was not in conflict and hatred. "Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministry." (2Timothy 4:11)

5.1.2.3. Gives peace of mind and increases confidence in leadership

While I was driving in front of many other drivers I was very stressed because of what others think about me. When the Passing Lane came others continued to follow me that gave me peace of mind and confidence. Likewise, in leadership it is very important to give freedom to pass by us. After a big crowd left Him, Jesus asked the disciples; "Then Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you also want to go away?" (John 6:67). He gave them a freedom to choose whom to follow.

74. Mullins, 110.

Effective leadership is not dictatorship; and if there are others who are in a better leadership skill we have free to discuss on the issue and to transfer the responsibility for the betterment of the church and ministry, ultimately for the glory of God. Because it is His, not ours. Such freedom gives peace of mind and if the followers comfortable under the existing leadership it increases leadership confidence.

5.2. Recommendations

After the research and working on the topic I recommend the following important points which can help the Ethiopian evangelical church leaders to have effective leadership transition and to address the issues in relation with applying effective leadership transition.

5.2.1. The Biblical Model of Effective Leadership Transition

The following four dimensions will give the biblical model and clear guidelines for the application of effective leadership transitions in the evangelical churches in Ethiopia.

5.2.1.1. Spiritual Dimension

As spirituals and followers of the Spirit God the church and its leaders' principles are spiritual. For this reason an effective leadership transition has a spiritual dimension towards God, the Chief Leader. To address the spiritual dimension:

1. Following God's will and Highlight Christ

In leadership the best example and model is the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. He clearly showed how a leader act and live in the middle of the followers. Not only that his selection and recruiting of the emerging was unexpected. He mostly chose illiterate and uneducated people to replace him. According to Coleman Jesus' choice was unexpected;

They were impulsive, temperamental, easily offended, and had all the prejudices of their environment. In short, these men selected by the Lord to be his assistants represented an average cross section of society in their day. Not the kind of group one would expect to win the world for Christ. Yet Jesus saw in these simple men the potential of leadership for the Kingdom.... Though often mistaken in their judgments and slow to comprehend spiritual things, they were honest men, willing to confess their need. Their mannerisms may have been awkward and their abilities limited, but with the exception of the traitor, their hearts were big. What is perhaps most significant about them was their sincere yearning for God and the realities of his life.⁷⁵

His way of choosing the potential leaders was not focusing on the outside qualifications; He saw the leadership potential from the inside in them. After that Jesus gave to His disciples what He received from the father without any reservation to make them capable of their call and transitioning the leadership to them. It was one of His primary mission. As He said: "And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me." John 17:22-23 His mission and accomplishment was to train and prepare the disciples and hand over the leadership to these emerging leaders. Getting those emerging leaders for Jesus was His focus of mission and it gave him joy and felt accomplishment. That is why He said in v.4 "I have finished the work which You have given Me to do." Indeed, He gave them his own glory which was his before the worlds were made, that they all might be one even as He was one in the Father.

75. Robert E. Coleman, *The Master plan of Evangelism*. (Grand Rapids, MI, Fleming H. Revell Co., 1972), 23.

As leaders, we have to have Christ-centered attitude to select, train, prepare and produce effective leaders. That is when our accomplishment and joy as sent-out leaders will be fulfilled. As Blackaby said: “True joy comes in knowing that one’s work has been preserved and is continuing due to the leader’s careful preparation of a successor... Leaders always have an eye on the future and that includes preparing their organization for its next leader. The rewards for this responsibility of leadership are threefold. Not only do the leaders benefit, but so do their successors and their organizations.”⁷⁶

It is getting an experience of joy when looking at the son or the younger generation on our team and church fulfilling their calling in their generation. It’s remarkably satisfying to play a small part in their success. Every generation brings new and fresh ideas.

We all have to pass the responsibility so God can release new vision and blessing for the next generation of ministry. The outgoing leaders must faithfully fulfill their calling in their time and then be willing to move aside for the new work God wants to do through someone else. Making the transition more effective and available for the successors is part of the victory and fulfilment of the existing leaders’ mission. The existing leaders’ legacy is determined by their next generation successors. Mullins in his book said the following: “Partners will determine your accomplishments, but spiritual sons will determine your legacy. Partners operate while you are alive, but sons continue after you are gone.”⁷⁷

76. Henry & Richard Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership: Moving people on to God’s agenda*. Nashville, TN. Broadman & Holman Pub., 2001), 279-280.

77. Tom Mullins, *Passing the Leadership Baton: A winning transition plan for your ministry* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2015), 92.

As it is written in Ephesians 4:11-12; The main pastoral mandate is not to do ministry *for* the church members only, but to equip them to do ministry and prepare them for leadership. An equipped church is healthy enough to weather the challenges that come with a pastoral transition. If the pastor has been fulfilling their calling of equipping the saints, the longer they're pastoring the church, the more equipped they should be to carry on with effective ministry whether the pastor is there or not. Leaders who are focusing on the long-term success of their church or ministry are working hard for effective leadership transition to keep their legacy in the church after they leave. As Wade-Benzoni wrote the following important point the existing leaders need to give priority for the benefit of the organization or the church.

As a leader, leaving a great legacy is arguably the most powerful thing you can do in your career and life because it enables you to have influence well into the future – even after you are out of the picture yourself. It's key to optimizing your impact on your organization and its people. Legacy building in business contexts can take the form of working to ensure the long-term viability of the organization and leaving it stronger, more productive, and more valuable than it was before.... Thinking about your legacy is also a great way to ensure that you are taking into account the long-term perspective of your organization and resisting the temptation to make myopic decisions that are overly focused on short-term gain.⁷⁸

An effective leader is always looking for how he can best advance the people and the mission where he has been called to lead. And truly great leaders are transformational leaders. Because of their investment and leadership, there will always be evidence of positive change and producing other leaders to expand and multiply God's kingdom.

In addition to this, it can never be stressed enough to say that in any leadership transition, the head of everything remains the same. In Matthew 28:18, Jesus said, "...All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me." In any organization, complete authority belongs to Christ and we are to keep it that way.

⁷⁸. Kimberly Wade-Benzoni. <http://hbr.org>. How to Think About Building Your Legacy by December 15, 2016, (accessed February 26, 2018).

While we replace a person who used to fill our current positions, we never replace Jesus Christ as being the center of all work and advancement. When we seek Jesus in all we do and place Him at the center, we will see Him move in the midst of challenges of leadership transition.

To prioritize God's will the following three instruments are very important.

1) Prayer or waiting on God: whatever the spiritual thing is needed to be done in life and ministry prayer is the key thing to start. As Jesus teaches us to pray for His will be done on earth as it is in heaven, it is important to pray for the fulfillment of effective leadership transition as well according to the will of God. Even before Jesus select and appoint his successors He prayed and waited the whole night with His Father.

The Bible says "Pray without ceasing" (1Thes 5:17); "in everything by prayer and supplication let your requests be made known to God" (Phil 4:6); "continue steadfastly in prayer" (Col 4:2). This first is so obvious that it almost goes without saying, except that it must be said – and said again. Why? We rarely engage with sufficient intention and devotion the invitation to prayer. And it must be a particularly focused kind of prayer, consistently acknowledging first and foremost the sovereignty of Almighty God and His good purposes for His people.

As the Israelites moved from their rather loose coalition of tribes to the monarchy, Samuel's farewell address to them closed with his assurance that he would pray for them. Not to do so would be sin against the LORD, he said (1 Sam 12:23). And this was in the face of his displeasure at their request for a king (1 Sam 8:6). Following that promise of prayer, he admonished them to fear the LORD, serve God faithfully with all their hearts, and remember the great things God had done for them (1 Sam 12:24).

When David became the king of all Israel, he moved the capital to Jerusalem, restored the Ark of the Covenant to its proper location with the Tabernacle, and began plans for a Temple to the LORD that Solomon would build. These were major activities, some even radical. As he handed along the leadership mantle to Solomon, he affirmed the greatness, majesty, glory, and sovereignty of God, thanking God for His abundant blessings and praying that the people would forever direct their hearts toward God. Furthermore, he prayed that Solomon would keep God's commandments faithfully. (1 Chron. 28-29).

When the Son of David, Jesus, was on the edge of His death, He prayed that His glory manifest in the cross would be made evident along with the glory of God. And then He prayed for the small apostolic group who would transform the world - that God would keep, protect, sanctify and unify them in the same oneness as is shared in the godhead (John 17). That very apostolic community was defined by devotion to the apostles' teaching, to fellowship, and to prayer (Acts 2.42).

Paul, the apostle to the Gentile world, made prayer the essential of his ministry on behalf of the new churches and new leaders to whom he wrote. That they would have the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, knowing the hope of their calling, the riches of their inheritance with the saints and the great power of the resurrection (Eph. 1:15-22). That the Spirit would empower them, that Christ would indwell them, that they would be rooted and grounded in love to know the love of Christ in its fullest (Eph. 3:14-21).

Finally Moses was praying about his successor and God showed him Joshua. "Then Moses spoke to the LORD, saying: ¹⁶ "Let the LORD, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation, ¹⁷ who may go out before them and go in before

them, who may lead them out and bring them in, that the congregation of the LORD may not be like sheep which have no shepherd.” And the LORD said to Moses: “Take Joshua the son of Nun with you, a man in whom *is* the Spirit, and lay your hand on him.” (Num. 27:16-18) For effective leadership transition prayer is always very essential to accomplish the Master’s will.

2) Study God’s Word: What God has said in Scripture needs to be the centerpiece of any Christian institution’s foundation and especially as it moves from one chapter in its story to the next. Long before Samuel offered his prayer on behalf of the Israelites and their king, God commanded through Moses that the king must read the Torah all the days of his life. “Also it shall be, when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write for himself a copy of this law in a book, from *the one* before the priests, the Levites. And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God and be careful to observe all the words of this law and these statutes, (Deut. 17:18-19).

How odd! No, how absolutely necessary; the king was to learn to fear the Lord his God by keeping the law and not falling prey to pride and disobedience. Like leader; like people, as the subsequent history of Israel demonstrated. As Joshua took over from Moses, God exhorted him to meditate on the Torah day and night so that he would be careful to do all that was written therein. It was not considered an old-fashioned tradition; these were the words of life for Joshua (Josh 1:8). Likewise, the Psalmist enjoined delighting in and meditating on the Law of the Lord (Psalm 1:2), transition times or not. God’s word is the standard and the constitution of spiritual life and leadership.

As spiritual leaders the Word of God should be the guiding compass in every life and ministry situation and decision. “How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word.” Psalm 119:9. The existing leaders need to lead and recruit according to God’s Word and the emerging leaders need to fulfill their ministry task by following His Word.

3) Find Courage in God: as an existing and emerging leaders transition has its own challenge and difficulties. In this case the main thing to fulfill God’s will is being courage in God to do His will and stand strong in the middle of controversies and unclear ways. God’s message to Joshua, the emerging leader, was to be strong and stand firm in the midst of the loss of the existing popular leader and in the time of the transition. God said to Joshua: “Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go.” (Joshua 1:7)

During transition the challenge is for both the existing and emerging leaders. The existing leaders have a fear of what will happen next after they hand over the leadership and tempted to not to do it. This is one of the challenges for the absence of effective leadership transition in the Ethiopian churches. God’s message for such leaders is to find courage in God and do His will. He is in control of everything.

2. God Initiates and Requires Effective Leadership Transition

He is a God of all generations; beyond the limitedness of the leaders, His leadership continues across all generations. For this reason He raises leaders to accomplish His will and lead His people towards His will throughout all generations. When Elijah was

praying to die without replacing the next generation leader God told him to continue and appoint the prophet Elisha and the king up on Israel.

Paul, the existing leader, said to the emerging leader, Timothy, “You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.” (2Tim. 2:1-2) God’s Word is saying the leadership transition with the content of His truth in every generation is required by Him from the leaders ahead of every generations. So that all existing leaders need to be aware of the required transition to fulfill in the generation to come effectively.

5.2.1.2. Relational Dimension

The relational dimension is very important, particularly for the relationship between the existing leaders and the emerging leaders. Healthy relationship is foundational for the development of emerging leaders. One quality of the biblical example leaders with an effective leadership transition is to have a healthy relationship with their successors. For example Moses with Joshua, David with Solomon, Elijah with Elisha, Jesus with the disciples, and Paul with Timothy had healthy and intimate relationship with each other.

To correct and encourage one another the relationship is very important. Even between family members without good relationship and love it is hard to discipline and correct the children as a parent. One of the reasons for the gap created between the existing leaders and emerging leaders in the Ethiopian evangelical church is the absence of good relationship and the atmosphere of listening to each other.

As the parents are always responsible to take the initiative to solve the problems and to narrow the gaps between their kids; so as a spiritual fathers and brothers the existing leaders need to take the initiative to create the relationship and welcome the emerging leaders as a spiritual children and brothers. Such kind of relationship will grow into developing trust between them. This is the key for the predecessors and successors to implement an effective leadership transition among them.

1. Building Team work spirit

In leadership development and preparation for transition, team building is one of the important key principles. Developing a co-workers and team spirit with the emerging leaders will create great harmony and encourage them to follow what the existing leaders say and ready to be corrected as well. In the Ethiopian evangelical churches this is one of the current problems between the existing and emerging leaders. There is no harmony and respect for each other. Because there is no trust among them. As Blanchard and Hodges wrote: "Trust is also a key factor in successful implementation at the team level. Without the trust developed in the one-on-one relationship, empowerment will never happen. Individuals in the group will not empower each other to accomplish an assigned task if they do not trust each other. Failure to empower is one of the key reasons that teams are ineffective."⁷⁹ This absence of trust leads to disrespect each other and avoids the relationship and fellowship between the existing leaders and emerging leaders.

We see the attitude of competition, not the spirit of cooperation. One of the bad behavior that creates gap between the old and new generation leaders is the spirit of competition. The leadership in the Ethiopian evangelical churches must avoid

79. Ken Blanchard and Phil Hodges, *Lead Like Jesus: Lessons from the Greatest Leadership Role Model of All Time*. (Nashville, TN., Thomas Nelson, Inc., 2005), 27.

competition and build team spirit. In his book Maxwell wrote the following statement concerning the need of team in leadership: “The highest level of achievement in life cannot be accomplished by any person working alone. People need one another. If you are a leader with a big vision, you won’t be able to achieve it without a team of leaders in an inner circle.... If you desire to have a great inner circle, then start developing people. Only by raising up leaders and inviting them to pursue the vision with you will you achieve big things.”⁸⁰

Without team leadership the success of the organization as well as the leadership strength to apply the preparation, training, and effective leadership transition is unthinkable. No effective, healthy organization can rely on one or a few individuals for its strength. Real, long lasting strength in churches is built on shared leadership; which means teams of people who complement each other’s strength and compensate for one another's shortcomings.

The stronger the team and the more widely leadership is dispersed throughout an organization, the greater its chances for surviving major transitions. A factor certain to ease the loss of effective leaders is the existence of healthy, confident teams capable of building on and sustaining success.

When authority is assigned in teams, influence exceeds individuals. Any leader has strengths and weaknesses, but as teams, leaders can be a strong, stable force for good. How can a leadership team arrive at the place where it has the level of competence equal to the demands of the leadership transition? Getting there is not a simple task. The basis is trust, time, nurturing, and experience can bring that about. Intentional steps in the right

80. John C. Maxwell, *The 5 Levels of Leadership: Proven Steps to Maximize your potential.* (Orange, CA, Thomas Nelson, Inc., 1982), 217.

direction, however, can be helpful. A strong leadership team is deliberate and intentional in carrying out its work. They form a basis for trust and a framework of continuity and applying an effective leadership transition.⁸¹

2. Love and Forgiveness

When major changes and transitions appear in the church leadership there are many discomforts and confusions. Just as the Lord God is steadfastly merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in love and forgiveness (Exodus 34:6-7), so also His children. While change can raise uncertainties as expectations are shaken and restructured, practicing loyal covenant love and forgiveness of affronts and oversights will sustain the community of God's people.

Love and forgiveness that build on the affirmation of God's sovereignty are the only solutions to the ugly thorn of bitterness and resentment. When Joseph addressed his brothers twenty years after their treachery against him, they had every reason to be fearful. He had been transformed from their little brother to a powerful ruler. Yet, he affirmed God's purposes saying it was God who sent him ahead of them (Gen 45:5-8) to preserve them. After their move to Egypt and Jacob's death, they again feared a reprisal from Joseph. Again, he reassured them that he knew God had meant all of those bitter circumstances for good. "Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid, for *am* I in the place of God? But as for you, you meant evil against me; *but* God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as *it is* this day, to save many people alive. Now therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones." And he comforted them and spoke kindly to them." (Gen 50:19-21).

81. Jay A. Conger, *The Leader's Change: Hand Book an essential guide to setting direction & Taking Action*. (San Francisco, CA; 1999), 321.

Joseph forgave his brothers who did evil things to him. Forgiveness keeps you in unity with your brothers and sisters. Whatever bad things or unnecessary comments you heard in the transition the solution to continue in a healthy way is forgiveness and love. This will create a peaceful and attractive atmosphere in the leadership and in the church.

3. Mentoring and Coaching

The relationship between the existing and emerging leaders must be built with the purpose of mentoring and coaching to equip with the leadership skill. Moses and Paul were continuously mentoring their successors, Joshua and Timothy respectively. As existing leaders each one of the leading pastors need to start to mentor at least one emerging leader for the purpose of developing that person to replace the leadership responsibility in case the existing leader is not around or leaving.

5.2.1.3. Character Dimension

In this dimension the focus is the work of God to shape and mold the character of leaders to grow into the likeness of Jesus Christ. Sometimes God allows certain incidents for the purpose of shaping the leaders' character. Clinton in his Boundary Processing article: "Certain incidents in our lives are used by God to shape us in various ways to give us leadership values, to teach us leadership lessons, to form character and instill deep convictions."⁸² For this reason the leaders need to realize the following important principles:

82. Clinton, J. Robert, *Boundary Processing: Looking at Critical Transition Times in Leader's Lives*. (CA., Altadena, Barnabas Publishers, 1992), 12.

1. Let God finish His work

As leaders this is one of the challenges every emerging leaders for that matter all leaders in their time of transition don't want to face and be patient. When God began to shape and mold the life and character of the leader to promote and make a transition, many times it is hard to accept it. According to William Bridges:

All transitions are composed of three phases: an ending, a neutral zone, and new beginning. The neutral zone is the time that you feel empty, meaningless inside of you and in the organization. Everything feels as though it is up for grabs and you don't quite know who you are or how you're supposed to behave, so this feels like a meaningless time. But it is actually a very important time. During your time in the neutral zone, you are receiving signals and cues as to what you need to become for the next stage of your work life. And, unless you disrupt it by trying to rush through the neutral zone quickly, you are slowly being transformed into the person you need to be to move forward in your life.⁸³

When we read the Bible, all the biblical heroes and leaders passed through many difficulties, some of them didn't have any clue what is in front of them, some of them had leadership vision and dream, but all of them were passing through this transition times. As David Psalm 119:71 said "It is good for me that I was humbled, so that I might learn your statutes." He didn't say it from the beginning, but after he passed the neutral zone of transition and allow God to finish His work on his life he understood the result was for his benefit.

In any boundary times God intentionally intervenes to teach the leaders in their processing times. The accumulation of these lessons guided by God over a life time build up the set of values that comprise a ministry philosophy. The lessons can deal with relationship with God, character and personal ethics, practical ministry guidelines, ministry ethics, guidance, destiny and other factors suited uniquely to the individual. The

83. William Bridges, *Transitions, Making sense of life's changes*. (Philadelphia, Da Capo Press, 2004), 80-81.

ultimate purpose of each lessons is to move us forward to guide us toward our place into God's destiny for us.⁸⁴

This is one of the challenges for the emerging leaders in the churches today. Some try to jump the neutral zone without letting God to finish His work on their life and vision, others try to take short cuts, both of these ways will abort the transition process in the life of leaders. Because of this the transition becomes complex and confused as well as its time becomes long and harder. Bridges wrote the following statement on this issue: "One of the most difficult aspects of the neutral zone is that most people don't understand it. They expect to be able to move straight from the old to the new. But this isn't a trip from one side of the street to the other. It's a journey from one identity to another, and that kind of journey takes time."⁸⁵

Particularly in the Ethiopian evangelical churches context this is one of the challenges many emerging leaders are facing. Especially when there is no good and developed leadership in the church the transition will also be full of difficulties and sometimes leadership transition become untouched issue. Such system and lack of good relationship with the existing leaders easily leads them to abort the process and do whatever they choose. Because of it there are so many confusions and chaos in the Ethiopian churches leadership. Unless God finished his work in the leader's life the fruit becomes unsatisfactory and destructive. Blanchard and Hodges recommend the following important point: "Effective leadership starts on the inside. Before you can hope to lead

84. Clinton, J. Robert, *Boundary Processing: Looking at Critical Transition Times in Leader's Lives*. (CA., Altadena, Barnabas Publishers, 1992), 13.

85. William Bridges, *Managing Transitions: Making the most of change*. (Philadelphia, Da Capo Press, 2009), 42.

anyone else, you have to know yourself.”⁸⁶ To be effective in leadership emerging leaders must make themselves available for God to work on their life. So as leader it is better to letting God finish and work on the character of the leader for his own benefit before the actual leadership responsibility comes at hand.

The important thing through the process of transition is faithfulness; both God’s complete faithfulness to His people and our firm dependability to our commitment to serve Christ and His Kingdom.

2. Always keep the balance of character and giftedness in ministry

Mostly this is the problem of the emerging leaders or the young generation. Because they have the charisma or the gift they assume they have everything. They began to stop listening and obeying their leaders. They just fired and continue in serving, sometimes they really don’t know what they are doing; just ministry. At that time the conflict, disobedience began and the relationship issues become at risk. If things are not done quickly they lose their patient. I know the challenge, because I passed through it.

What James wrote in the Bible is very important: “knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.” (James 1:3-4) Patience is character; to produce character in our life we have to pass in different tests. One of the temptation for the emerging leaders is finding short cuts to the leadership position as quickly as possible. God wants to shape the character of the leader by allowing the person to pass through many difficulties to produce patience and waiting God until His timing comes to transfer to the leadership responsibility.

86. Ken Blanchard and Phil Hodges, *Lead Like Jesus: Lessons from the Greatest Leadership Role Model of All Time*. (Nashville, TN., Thomas Nelson, Inc., 2005), 20.

When David was anointed by God he knew he will be the next king of Israel, but he was passed under the arrogant leadership of Saul. He faced persecution, exile and different challenges. Those different tests and trials shaped his character and he himself said: “My suffering was good for me, for it taught me to pay attention to your decrees.” (Psalm 119:71 NLT).

For leaders the balance of character and charisma is always very vital. In all God’s generals after they received the call or the anointing they passed through many difficulties. The reason is clear to shape their character and have a balanced life and ministry. Because as Jesus says: “Nor do they put new wine into old wineskins, or else the wineskins break, the wine is spilled, and the wineskins are ruined. But they put new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved.” Both character and charisma needs to work together in the life of a leader.

When the balance of these two essential spiritual elements go together in the life of a minister it keeps the emerging leader to be patience and faithful in doing what is at hand and waiting on God until the leadership transition comes.

3. Be patient

One of the challenges for the emerging leaders is to be in the leadership position as soon as possible. Because this we see so many times clashes with the existing leaders and even with God and their vision as well. That leads the emerging leaders to be untrusted and disobedience. So that in many places it causes conflict and division in the church.

Elisha was patient and follow Elijah until the end. It is very essential for effective leadership transition and for the continuity of effective ministry and leadership. Matured and grown leaders are not quick for the position, they always do their responsibility

faithfully and patiently. Even when the time comes and asked for the leadership position they are not quick to run and claim the position.

When God was speaking to Moses he replied; “But Moses said to God, “Who *am* I that I should go to Pharaoh,” (Ex. 3:11. It is very important that as spirituals to be patient and wait unto God. It is not us it is God who can open the doors for ministry.

5.2.1.4. Practical Dimension

In developing and applying effective leadership transition there are important components need to practically done in any church and organization leadership.

1. Teaching and training on effective leadership transition

In this research there are many things that need a practical action in the Ethiopian evangelical churches in relation with effective leadership transition. Most importantly understanding the biblical truth about this issue is an eye-opening subject to the chaotic leadership situation in the Ethiopian evangelical churches. One of the spiritual tools that keeps leaders and Christian’s right is having God’s truth in them. Jesus says: “And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” (John 8:32)

As the research indicated it is one of the neglected subject in the existing leaders’ agenda. Every existing and emerging leaders needs to know the biblical meaning and significance of effective leadership transition for the growth of healthy church and for the expansion of God’s Kingdom. To fulfill God’s will in generations one of the key role player is the effective leadership transition. To transfer the healthy message of the gospel to the next generation the healthy leadership transition with love and blessing is very essential and vital.

By using different public and social medias, such as television interviews, seminars, short term trainings, and other ways to create awareness about effective leadership transition in the Ethiopian evangelical churches leadership is very important.

In addition to this opening short term training centers to train the existing and emerging leaders about effective leadership transition and how to apply in their church and ministry. Teaching the course about biblical examples on leadership transition and its benefit for the generations to come in different theological and Bible colleges is also very important for the expanding of the subject in the Ethiopian churches. These all creates awareness and clear understanding about the need of the issue and its importance in the Ethiopian evangelical churches leadership.

2. Planning and Preparation

To have effective leadership transition, preparation ahead of time is essential and leads to successful and peaceful transition. Mullins in his book explains the importance of preparation for transition: “Every coach will tell you that preparation is the key to victory. When you prepare for transition effectively, you stabilize your organization and give security to your people, which then positions you for a smooth and successful exchange. Without proper preparation, transitions can cause great turbulence for everyone. Failing to plan is planning to fail.”⁸⁷ When there is lack of proper preparation for leadership transition it causes unexpected shock and confusion when the need comes. So, it is one of the necessary principles in effective leadership transition.

87. Tom Mullins, *Passing the Leadership Baton: A winning transition plan for your ministry* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2015), 50.

During preparation by following a few key principles and tasks⁸⁸, churches committed to the value of training and development in sustaining excellence in performance can ease the upsets of transition. By being explicit about what is worth leaving behind and what is worth preserving for the future is the foundation of a healthy transition. It also sets a framework for the outgoing leaders for sorting out the qualities and competencies needed in successors, and for ensuring continuity in areas that work well. The exercise of identifying what works may also reveal gaps and areas with room for improvement.

To identify elements worth preserving, it may be valuable to consider specific categories and ask, "what from these categories is worth preserving as the organization moves into the future?" As a church the doctrines, vision, purposes, and goals, management philosophy, hiring philosophy and practices, training and development practices, and resource development capacity, service quality, partnerships and collaborations, leadership, decision making, and the core values of the church are some of the elements need to preserve.

The vision of top leadership transition can always create uncertainty and fear. The best solutions are information and participation. The written transition plan offers a tool for communication. Involving all members of the church in planning reduces uncertainty and promotes understanding. Encouraging church members to help identify qualities and competencies needed in leaders reinforces a sense of influence over the changing landscape. During preparation the following very important tasks that helps the leadership transition more effective and successful are:

88. Joseph Christy. <https://www.td.org/user/content/JosephChristy> TD MAGAZINE, Successful Leadership Transition Sunday, March 15, 2009.

1) Recruiting and Selecting Successors: It is an important step in the leadership transition process. Recruiting and selecting the actual successors is one of the greatest job for the existing leaders and it needs to be carefully observed based on the potential and qualities needed in leadership.

Before Jesus selected His successors, He prayed all night and consult with the Father. “One day soon afterward Jesus went up on a mountain to pray, and he prayed to God all night. ¹³ At daybreak he called together all of his disciples and chose twelve of them to be apostles.” (Luke 6:12-13) From Jesus’ action we see how the recruiting and selecting the successors is very important and serious task for the existing leaders from the beginning of their leadership.

There are two ways of recruiting and selecting the successor; from outside and from inside. According to Collin’s study developing and choosing from the inside is way better than from the outside.

First, Collin's research revealed 100-year-old organizations hire from within. Every organization has a culture. Ministers we hire from outside... tend to last five years or less. They run into cultural issues that they most often misplay. Both they and the people end up hurt. On the other hand, pastors that we hire from inside tend to last twenty to thirty years and longer. They know how to navigate the culture. They know where the boundaries are and just how far they can go without stirring up unmanageable conflict.⁸⁹

Developing a relationship with the emerging leaders from within and preparing them for ministry and leadership is the best thing to do as an existing leader.

One CEO mentioned by Bob Russel and Bryan Bucher said; “From now on, choosing my successor is the most important decision I’ll make. It occupies a considerable amount of time every day.”⁹⁰ Even if it seems hard and needs time and

89. Roger Barrier. <https://www.crosswalk.com>, How to Successfully Transition Your Church through New Leadership, January 2015, (accessed March 23, 2018).

90. Bob Russell and Bryan Bucher, Transition Plan (Louisville, KY: Ministers Label Publishing, 2010), 112.

effort it is worth it. Leadership transition needs time and concentration for preparation to see the church or organization grow and effectively continue its mission. “The CEO who gives of his time and self to develop people will receive a double blessing: (1) growth and effectiveness in the organization as a whole and, (2) a larger pool of quality managers and executives from which to select his future leaders and a possible successor.”⁹¹

In recruiting and selecting leaders there are nonnegotiable characteristics of a successor; character and integrity are the indispensable moral and ethical qualities of a leader. Select someone of high character and moral integrity to succeed you because leadership operates on the basis of trust. People do not follow titles; they follow character, because character earns trust. Select a successor who demonstrates consistency in his or her character and commitment. In addition to this a worthy candidate must be gifted and skilled.⁹² Without a skill and a gift the task of leadership cannot be accomplished. “Leadership in the church shouldn’t be viewed as something to be inherited! It has to be a clear calling from God.”⁹³

The single most important strategy for effective transition of leadership is selection of the right person. Matching the right people to the right jobs and place leads to high performance and enhances the work environment. With the right people, results improve, confidence builds, conflict is reduced, and complaints are less likely. “The succession process is not the reduction of leadership responsibility. It is a change in the

91. George Barna, *Leaders on Leadership: Wisdom, Advice and Encouragement on the Art of Leading God’s People* (Ventura, California: Regal Books, 1982), 304.

92. Tom Mullins, *Passing the Leadership Baton: A winning transition plan for your ministry* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2015), 77.

93. *Ibid.*, 91.

type of leadership responsibility. It is an opportunity to contribute as much as possible to bring about positive change to the organization.”⁹⁴

These far-reaching hiring or appointing decisions affect both quality of services and the right people on leadership that is the bottom line. Nowhere else in a church is the correlation between the right people and the best results stronger than at the top leadership level. Selection begins with setting the appropriate criteria and designing recruitment to reach the people who meet those requirements. Conventional criteria address call, education, experience, knowledge, skills, and personal qualities.

Churches that want to ensure healthy transitions need to go beyond traditional criteria and openly tie qualifications to research findings that associate effective leadership with emotional intelligence and capabilities often difficult to capture in measurable terms. Like Jesus we should recruit those who come to us on their initiative and express a genuine, God-given interest in our leadership training because He did it for Andrew and John in (John 1;43), and on the other hand as Jesus took the initiative and invited Philip to follow (John 1;43) we would be wise to keep on the lookout for these people and go after them when we find them.⁹⁵

If the recruiting and selection is from outside of the church these include seeing the big picture, adapting change, dealing with diverse participants, and cultivating relationships. Increasingly, ways of uncovering whether candidates possess those qualities and competencies are developing. Thorough background checks and visits to sites where candidates work can reveal those qualities.

94. Wheeler, Meredith Edward, Ph.D. <https://pqdtopen.proquest.com>, The leadership succession process in megachurches, Temple University, 2008). 332.

95. Aubrey Malphurs and Will Mancini, Building Leaders: Blueprints for developing leadership at every level of your church. (Grand Rapids, Bakers Books, 2004), 69.

In addition to this, beyond all the qualifications the most important principle and instrument that leaders need is to develop and wisely immerse their leadership selection process in much prayer as Jesus did.

2) Orienting and Training successors: To have matured and edified potential leaders and to replace and continue the ministry through them, training and orienting the new leaders is one of the fundamental task for the existing church leadership. Malphurs said:

The leaders of today's churches must not only win lost people to Christ but train them as well, especially those with leadership potential, and see that they are deployed in ministry. Far too often we pursue a person only until he or she accepts Christ. It's imperative as well that we pursue and mobilize people to maturity and deployment in ministry. Jesus' imperative is to 'make disciples'. This means making and maturing believers. Thus deployment involves our winning lost people to faith in Christ and then moving them to spiritual maturity. God has gifted all to serve him and some specifically to lead for him.⁹⁶

Our focus shouldn't be only winning the lost people, but also to make them disciples and leaders in their God-given potential and gift in God's kingdom.

After training and orienting the emerging leaders appointing or hiring is the first step of orientation. The process itself expresses the values, goals, and expectations of a church. And a badly executed process communicates a message as loudly as a well-structured one; so, make the transition and the appointment as clear as it is needed. The selection process begins in the training of new leaders by the way of the church's or organization's structures of recruitment, presentations, interviews, and background studies.

Once a hiring decision is made, it is a mistake to neglect formal orientation to introduce new leaders to central issues and concepts in the church; for example: values,

96. Ibid., 72.

purpose, leadership structure, best practices of the church and ministry, past accomplishments, personnel policies and practices, ethical standards, financial conditions, government, community, and media relations; safety and security matters; and measures of organization performance. A logically organized resource manual that systematically gathers essential information in a single, easily accessible format can effectively complement orientation.

Effective orientation is never only formal. It will be delivered in many ways and continually. According to John Maxwell: “Leadership develops daily, not in a day. You have to be willing to take it step by step. You have to put in many hours of mentoring and wait months, years, and sometimes decades for people to develop into good leaders.”⁹⁷ Often the most important information is handed down to new generations through stories, experiences, and practical demonstrations. Good transition strategies do not ignore these sources. An outcome applies if the departing leader has much to offer and is available. Appointing a successor before the outgoing leader leaves has obvious benefits for information-sharing and a smooth transition.

In Malphurs book he wrote how Jesus invest His time to train and orient the disciples: “Though Jesus ministered to the crowd, he focused on and trained the core. He believed that leadership training was vital to the success of his ministry during his time on earth and later. Thus, it was important that he spend much time in developing leaders for the kingdom. He trained his disciples before sending them out to minister.”⁹⁸

In the Gospel of Mark 3:14 Jesus says: “Then He appointed twelve, ^[a]that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach, ¹⁵and to have ^[a]power ^[t]to heal sicknesses and to cast out demons:” before He send them out and authorize them He

97. John C. Maxwell, *The 5 Levels of Leadership: Proven Steps to Maximize your potential.* (Orange, CA, Thomas Nelson, Inc., 1982), 216.

98. Aubrey Malphurs and Will Mancini, *Building Leaders: Blueprints for developing leadership at every level of your church.* (Grand Rapids, Bakers Books, 2004), 70.

called them to live with Him. This is the most important call for the emerging leaders to abide with the caller before they speak or doing anything for him. The existing leader needs to train and edify the emerging leader in many ways.

Moses continually took Joshua with him and trained him in practical ways. Besides the formal training guiding the emerging leaders to the ministry and showing them what leadership looks like is more influential in the life of the emerging leaders. “So Moses arose with his assistant Joshua, and Moses went up to the mountain of God.” (Ex. 24:13)

Moses didn’t only take Joshua under his wing, he also shared the leadership responsibility and gave him authority to lead and experience leadership himself. “And Moses said to Joshua, “Choose us some men and go out, fight with Amalek. Tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in my hand.” So Joshua did as Moses said to him, and fought with Amalek. (Ex.17:9-10) Moses trained and oriented about leadership before the actual leadership transition happened. “Then the LORD said to Moses, “Write this *for* a memorial in the book and recount *it* in the hearing of Joshua,” Ex. 17:14

3) Building Communication: One of the most important element in preparing for transition is communication. The goal of communication in a time of transition is to keep unity and assuring the core values and the mission of the church is not going to change. Relationships are at the heart of leadership. No transition can neglect the importance of social communication. “A change of leadership can be difficult. Congregations, pastors and denominational leaders have to work hard to effect smooth pastoral leadership transitions... Part of a successful transition is emotional, as well. In the time before

departing, the pastor should help the congregation shift its focus to the future. If people want to throw a going-away party, for example, the pastor should ensure the event is not about him or her, but is a celebration of their ministry together.”⁹⁹ Clearly and faithfully address the transition and communicating every level of ministry department and members of the congregation minimizes the tension in leadership transition.

Being open to communicate as often as needed will help and affect the church members and leaders to understand the transition and the change ahead and will help to understand the leadership’s care for them and also it keeps them involved and connected to the organization and the new coming leader. Like other elements of transition, this aspect begins with recruitment and selection by involving a wide range of members at every stage.

Communicating the church members in different levels will help the transition to be successful and effective. In addition to introducing the new leader, it is also vital for the new leader to communicate the church with the vision in the time of introduction. Mullins in his book stated it as follows: “When the successor is announced, it is vital for this new leader to communicate early on the vision the Lord has given him or her for the future of the church or organization. This will help your people get excited about what the future holds and give them a sense of direction to move toward in the midst of change.”¹⁰⁰ Communication is vital in transition.

Transitions involve loss and worry as the familiar passes and the unknown lies ahead. Wise leaderships acknowledge that uncertainty is natural in change. They allow

99. Bob Wells, Faith and Leadership: Making transition. (<https://www.faithandleadership.com>, June 2009).

100. Tom Mullins, Passing the Leadership Baton: A winning transition plan for your ministry (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2015), 68.

time for grieving and create opportunities for celebration. They conduct benefits of passage that are as important to those left behind as to those moving on or coming aboard. In Mullins explanation: “One of the biggest jobs for both the outgoing leader and the successor in transition is to stabilize the team members before, during, and after transition.”¹⁰¹ And also the leaving leaders need to set an example, model behavior, and take responsibility for the specific aspects of welcoming a new generation leader.

King David assembled all representatives and officials and clearly communicate the transition to his son Solomon and what God told him to do. “Now David assembled at Jerusalem all the leaders of Israel: the officers of the tribes and the captains of the divisions who served the king, the captains over thousands and captains over hundreds, and the stewards over all the substance and ^[a]possessions of the king and of his sons, with the officials, the valiant men, and all the mighty men of valor... He has chosen my son Solomon to sit on the throne of the kingdom of the LORD over Israel.” (1Ch. 28:1, 6) Having a clear communication about the process of the transition and the successor’s exact identity; particularly communicating what the will of God in the transition greatly helps the transition to be more effective.

4) Completing major tasks and projects: During leadership transitions significant tasks should not be left unfinished, in terms of specific tasks or relationships. Finishing things up is a gift and facilitating to successors. On the other hand, when churches are in instability, it is impossible to tie up all the threads in advance of transition. But matters of serious weight that are outstanding need to be identified, their status defined, and all relevant information arranged.

101. Ibid., 66.

At times, outgoing leaders may decide to leave some things undone. It may be advisable to keep a key position open in deference to a successor, to postpone starting a project that will take some time to complete, or to delay one with significant long-term policy implications or controversial aspects that are not easily resolved.

However, outgoing leaders contribute immensely to easing transition when, at a minimum, they anticipate and identify critical issues in advance, particularly those crossing into personnel, financial, and legal realms.

King David is a good example in completing major tasks and projects before he transferred to Solomon. He prepared all needed resources and received the plan before he handed over to his successor. “All *this*,” said David, “the LORD made me understand in writing, by *His* hand upon me, all the ^(b)works of these plans.” (1Ch. 28:19)

In conclusion following the strategies described here do not guarantee perfect leadership transitions; many factors can influence how transitions occur. But applying the elements mentioned above can reduce uncertainty and increase the chances of success in transition. Let me conclude this idea with what Mullins said: “Remember, your succession plan is not a success if your successor fails because you failed to prepare him!”¹⁰²

3. The inevitability of Leadership transition

Every leader has his own generation and time limit in leadership. When we read the Bible, the Holy Spirit testifies to King David as follows: “For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, died;” Acts 13:36. As the Bible clearly says David served the Lord on his time, after that the turn is for the next generation.

102. Tom Mullins, *Passing the Leadership Baton: A winning transition plan for your ministry* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2015), 100.

God calls leaders in every generation to carry out His mission in their own generation. He is the one who can live forever in leadership. Whereas we all are called for the limited time and to accomplish specific task. I don't remember who said it but I remember the quote; "Be a leader, not the leader". To think I'm 'the leader' of the church leads to dictatorship and a position oriented person than doing the leadership function. Nowadays the role of a pastor may be over-elevated in our current church condition, particularly in the emerging churches circle; that doesn't mean the human leadership doesn't matter. It does. But the pastor should be *a* leader in the church, not '*the* leader'.

One of the primary reasons leadership transition is so dangerous is because it often leaves a total leadership vacuum when the current pastor or leader leaves. Great leaders don't only make followers, they also make more leaders.

Its Christ's church. Let's put him first, be good stewards, and pass it on to future generations in better shape than we found it. We all need to have the humility to remember that it's not our church. No matter what position we hold, or how long we've held it. George Barna in his leadership book stated the following:

Executive successions are rarely easy, especially today when so many of our leaders have become heroes, often unwilling to surrender control of a firm to which they have dedicated their lives. This is particularly true when the succession leads to retirement. Some CEOs labor with the mindset that their work is not yet done. They measure their success in life by their own career accomplishments. History has shown us, however, that many outstanding accomplishments were started by a talented individual whose life or career ended before all his goals and visions became reality. That person's successor then accepted the responsibility to fulfill that vision and complete the unfinished task. One of the best test of leadership is the willingness to pass the baton to a successor and let him carry it across the finish line.¹⁰³

Even though we started the church or ministry, we can't finish all the work by ourselves. It must go beyond us and our time. It is God who is in control with unlimited

103. George Barna, *Leaders on Leadership: Wisdom, Advice and Encouragement on the Art of Leading God's People* (Ventura, California: Regal Books, 1982), 301-302.

time, but we have limited time. We have to work faithfully in our time and pass the church's leadership responsibility for the next generation by working diligently on it.

4. Empower the successor and make the transition at the right time

Empowerment is the intentional beginning of transferring leadership authority to an emerging leader within specified boundaries from an established leader who maintains responsibility for the ministry. Empowering is about authority and responsibility. The heart of empowerment is the transfer of decision-making control over an area of ministry. The good example of this empowerment experience is like teaching someone to drive a car. The beginner driver must first study the rules of the road, watch more experienced drivers, and learn how to operate the vehicle. But the student cannot actually drive the car until he or she sits in the driver's seat, the existing driver must take his hands off the wheel and move over. The transfer of authority is clear because only one person at a time can have his hands on the wheel and his foot on the pedal. Empowerment is a transfer of authority to an emerging leader from an existing leader.¹⁰⁴

As leaders the great success is what they are doing for their successors to see and continue the development of the church after they leave the leadership. The real measure of a leaders' success is not the great things they have accomplished during their term, it's how much of a foundational legacy they leave for others or successors to build on.

Maxwell explained it as follows;

Leaving a successor is the last great gift a leader can give an organization. Leadership-transition difficulties are far too common, and like the passing of the baton in a relay race, a leadership transition must be planned and executed well. Success is dependent upon the leader with the baton handing it off to the next leader when both of them are running at maximum speed. True leaders put ego aside and strive to create successors who go beyond them. And they plan to hand off the baton off leadership in stride when they are still running at their peak. If a leader has already

104. Henry & Richard Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership: Moving people on to God's agenda*. Nashville, TN. Broadman & Holman Pub., 2001), 40-41.

begun to slow down, the baton is being handed off too late. No leader should hurt the organization's momentum by staying too long just for his or her own gratification.¹⁰⁵

If the existing leaders missed the right time to hand over the leadership responsibility to the next emerging leaders, it is delaying the development and speed of the growth of the church. This will hurt the church and is hurting the Ethiopian evangelical churches now. As of now, the existing leaders are not doing what is necessary to achieve effective leadership transition. Because of it the Ethiopian evangelical churches are facing so many challenges concerning leadership transition. One of the important steps in leadership transition is to make the transition at the right time. Transition is time sensitive issue. The readiness of the predecessor and the successor including the congregation has great impact on leadership transition.

The timing of a transition is important. The board members need to see the reasonableness of it at this point in the organization's history and acknowledge that at some point a succession is going to take place. Again this indicates forethought, a willingness to change before absolutely being forced into a transition due to diminished skills, passion, capacity or health.... The time to change is when there is still upward momentum versus waiting until the organization is in decline.¹⁰⁶

The real measure of leadership accomplishment is not the great things that get done during their term, it's how much of a foundational legacy they leave for the next generation to build on.

On the other hand, it's the outgoing leader's baton to give up until he or she feels it's time to make the transition, but it's the successor's baton to run with moving forward. Once the existing leader let go off the baton, it's not his to hold anymore. Avoid to try to take it back again. The best thing for the predecessors is to give encouragement and approval that all successors need in the new leadership responsibility. Bob Russel and

105. John C. Maxwell, *The 5 Levels of Leadership: Proven Steps to Maximize your potential.* (Orange, CA, Thomas Nelson, Inc., 1982, 250.

106. Wheeler, Meredith Edward, Ph.D. <https://pqdtopen.proquest.com>, , *The leadership succession process in megachurches* Temple University, 2008). 330.

Bucher explains and highly suggest some important points by comparing the pastoral transition with a relay race:¹⁰⁷ first, the one passing the baton must keep running at full energy until the baton is passed; second, the one receiving the baton must start running before he receives it; third, both runners must remain in the same lane; fourth, the baton must be passed in a timely manner; and lastly, after the exchange, the one passing the baton leaves the race to cheer for his successor.

Someone may ask how do I know it is time to leave. When somebody realized much greater potential exist for the organization than the existing capacity to lead; combined with tiredness and the need for fresh personal energy. The time to leave has arrived, and that truth helped the existing leader to let go.¹⁰⁸

A well preplanned and prepared leadership transition is the means for the growth and flourishing of a healthy church and an instrument for the multiplication of leaders in God's Kingdom. Roberts wrote in his book the following important point: "Senior leaders that failure to implement pastoral transition can stifle the leadership growth of subordinates and become a bottle neck to the progress of the church. On the other hand, a well-executed transition can ignite the growth potential of the new leader and the church."¹⁰⁹ Make the transition at the right time with the right successor.

107. Bob Russell and Bryan Bucher, *Transition Plan* (Louisville, KY: Ministers Label Publishing, 2010), 46.

108. Tom Mullins, *Passing the Leadership Baton: A winning transition plan for your ministry* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2015), 34-35.

109. Terry Roberts, *Passing the Baton: Planning for Pastoral Transition*. (USA, NavPress Publishing Group, 2015), 32.

Conclusion

To sum up, for leaders it is better to know leadership transition can be hard in any setting, whether it be in the context of ministry, corporate or community leadership. Yet in the midst of the trial and complications of transition, we know that a transition where Jesus is highlighted can become smooth and guided.

One interesting thing about leadership is the idea that it was never meant to be permanent. Any company, business, church, ministry or any other organization, in order to grow, will go through a season of leadership transition as God allows for new leadership to rise. If we want our organizations and movements to last longer than us, we need to keep in mind leadership transitions.

The consequences of failing to provide a successor are apparent in Scripture. When we see the case of Joshua and the generation that followed him. How ironic that after serving as Moses' assistant and successor, Joshua died without a successor. Was this a factor in the spiritual failure of the next generation? The book of Judges sadly reports that "the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua who had seen all the great works of the Lord. ... After that generation died, another generation grew up who did not acknowledge the Lord.... They abandoned the Lord, the God of their ancestors" (Judges 2:7-12)

As Roberts wrote: "To be sure Joshua served his generation well. But is it possible that the next generation "abandoned the Lord" because Joshua did not prepare a next generation to step into his shoes? According to the book of Judges, after Joshua's

death, there was no cohesive, guiding vision to unite the people. They were “sheep without a shepherd,”¹¹⁰

When we are examining the fruit we are called to bear in Scripture, we simply cannot arrive at any other conclusion. In the Great Commission, Jesus calls us to “make disciples,” not just grow and develop ourselves (Matt. 28:19). Paul also challenges church leaders not to do all ministry themselves but to train and equip “the saints for the work of ministry” (Eph. 4:12).

To conclude my ideas I refer to what Wilkes discovered in the biblical principles of how Jesus leads as servant:

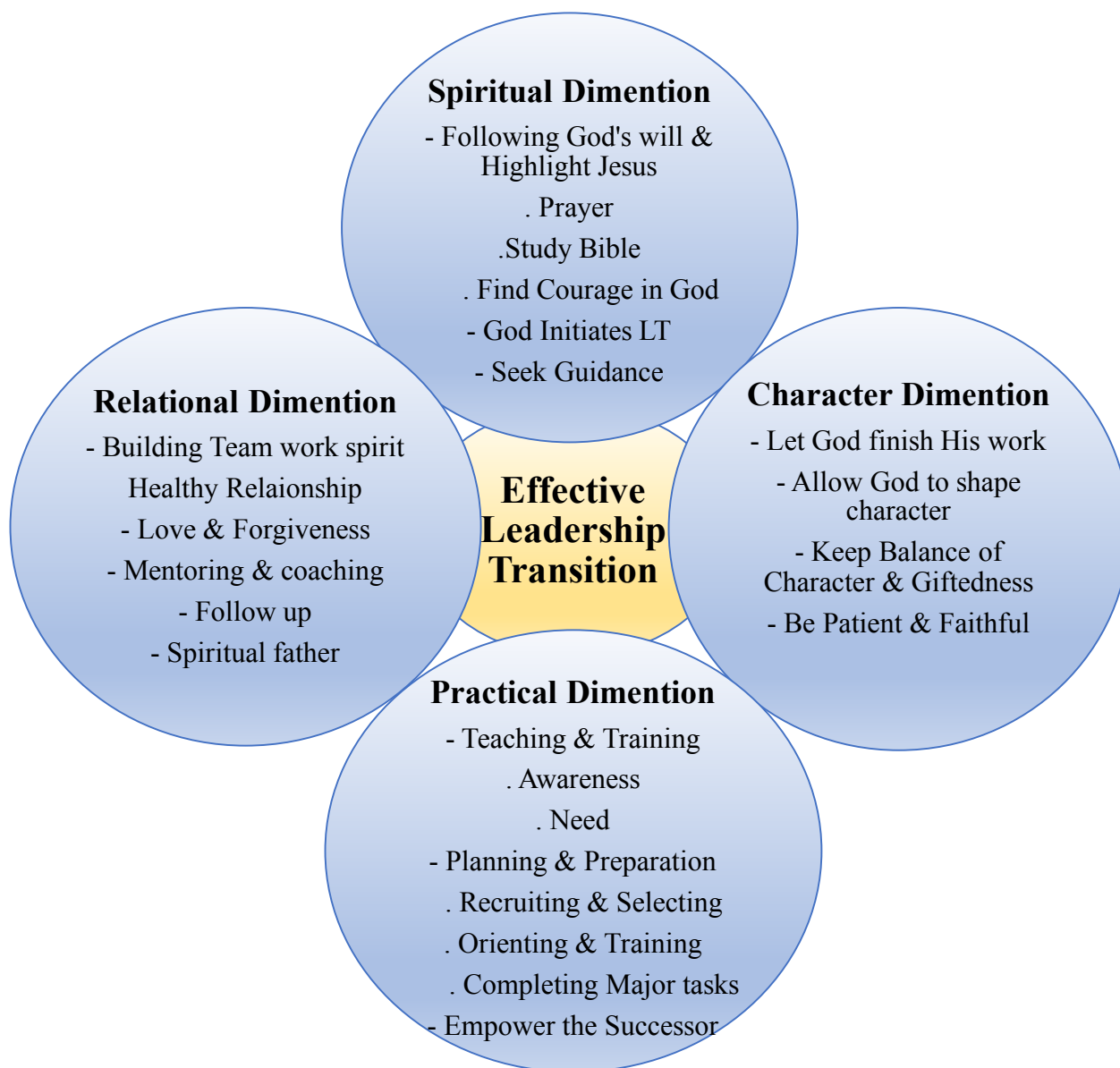
Jesus humbled himself and allowed God to exalt him. He followed his Father’s will rather than sought a position. Jesus defined greatness as being a servant and being first as becoming a slave. Jesus risked serving others because he trusted that He was God’s Son. Jesus left his place at the head table to serve the needs of others. Jesus shared responsibility and authority with those he called to lead. Jesus built a team to carry out a worldwide vision.¹¹¹

Let us not wait for another five years to begin, but do it right now and practice the blessings of effective leadership transition in the evangelical churches of Ethiopia. It will expand God’s Kingdom and keeps the church healthy and growing.

110. Roberts, 23.

111. Wikes, 11-12.

Biblical Effective Leadership Transition Model Components Diagram



5.2.2. Developing a Training Manual

According to the findings one of the dominant reason indicated for the ineffectiveness of the leadership transition is the absence of enough biblical training on the subject; especially on the topic of effective leadership transition there is no training in the Ethiopian evangelical churches. So I highly recommend to use this material and research as a spring board to prepare a short and long term training material for the practicality of effective leadership transition in the Ethiopian evangelical churches. I put the detail outlines of the material in Appendix C.

5.3. Conclusion

In leadership one of the very important key for the success and continual development of the church or organization is having a planned and prepared leadership transition among generations. Especially in the Ethiopian evangelical churches it is a timely issue and needs more attention for the application of effective leadership transition by understanding the biblical guidelines and following the examples.

Often when leaders leave, their churches are thrown into chaos. No one likes to talk about pastoral transitions. But if there is no plan for it, everyone in the church will suffer. Taking the time now to create a strategic plan will help keep the church's strength and assurance unbroken when transitions happen.

By understanding and acknowledging the benefit and need of leadership transition every existing leader in the church must start to work on it. The existing leaders

intentionally needs to plan for effective leadership transition. When pastors and churches intentionally confront the “elephant” of pastoral transition, not only do they avoid some of the pitfalls cited earlier, they also reap a number of benefits: They ensure continuity of vision from one administration to another, they uncork the creative potential of younger leaders and inject youthful vision and energy in to the life of the church, they stabilize the congregation, lessening the upheaval of major change, they help bridge the “generation gap,” and by elevating a younger leader to a higher role, the church continues to engage and inspire young people.¹¹²

The benefit is not only for the church and the successors, the transition also opens another chapter of meaningful ministry to the outgoing leader. Having handed off the burden of church management, he can establish a greater legacy as a fathering mentor to younger leaders or as a consultant to other pastors and churches.

Existing leaders should consider the possibility that their wisdom could be invested in places beyond their own church. They are a gold mine of information, experience, and encouragement that young pastors fresh from seminary are desiring. They can serve as mentors to these young pastors and as consultant to their churches.

They can invest relationally and benefit the Kingdom enormously. Simply, put experienced leaders in restricting one congregation is wasting an asset. Yet, when they continue to carry the daily burden of local church leadership and administration, the constraints of time and weakening energy leave little to invest elsewhere. Set free from that daily burden, they can ascend to greater levels of influence for the sake of the Kingdom.

112. Terry Roberts, *Passing the Baton: Planning for Pastoral Transition*, USA, NavPress Publishing Group, 2015), 19.

For the emerging leaders the primary assignment should be to be patient and faithful to the calling today and to prepare as much as possible for the future role it will be given in God's time. It is very important to be dependable and supportive wherever God has you now. God will never waste your time! He has you right where He wants you. Trust and ask Him to provide peace and wisdom regarding the timing for you to take the lead. Wait in front of him He is faithful.

To sum up effective leadership transition is the most important ministry task for both the existing and emerging leaders in the church within different generations. By understanding its vitality, the Ethiopian evangelical church leaders should follow the biblical examples and the guidelines discussed in this research to apply and practice in the church leadership. Leadership without effective succession leads to destruction. On the other hand, having effective leadership transition in the church strengthens the unity, and keeps its health and also fasten the growth and expansion of God's kingdom

Appendix A

Questionnaires and personal interview questions

1. What in your view is effective leadership transition?
2. How can leaders prepare others for leadership and have leadership transition?
3. Do you think there is effective leadership transition in the church? If not, why?
4. How is the relationship between the old generation leaders and the emerging leaders in the church?
5. Do you think effective leadership transition between generations have direct relationship in transferring the gospel for the next generations? How?
6. What do you think has influenced many church leaders' decision to hand over responsibility to other emerging leaders?
7. What do you think about the leadership transition in the Ethiopian Evangelical church today? What effect has the leadership had on the message of the gospel in this nation?
8. Do you have any recommendation to solve the leadership transition problem?
9. As a leader how can you keep the balance of character and charisma in your life and ministry to influence the emerging leaders?
10. In what ways has the leadership creating problems in the church in relation with effective leadership transition?
11. In your opinion, how can peaceful and effective biblical leadership transition be realized in the Ethiopian church context?

12. How can existing leaders identify emerging leaders?
13. In leadership development what is the responsibility of existing leaders and emerging leaders?
14. What the understanding of spiritual leadership and servant leadership has to do with practicing effective leadership transition?
15. When is the right time to hand over the responsibility for the existing leaders to the emerging leaders?

Appendix B
Data Analysis Table

The quantitative analysis table:

No	Description	Numbers	Number of respondent	Failed to respond	Percentage 100%
1	Number of questionnaires sent out	87	47	40	55%
2	Respondents Leadership status	47			
	Existing leaders	20	20		40%
	Emerging leaders	27	27		53%
3	Respondents category of 4.1.	47			
	4.1.1. E.L.T. Neglected	10	10		21%
	4.1.2. No good relationship	30	30		63%
	4.1.3. Absence of readiness	23	23		48%
	4.1.4. Not doing responsibilities	20	10		47%
	4.1.5. Consequences of lacking E.L.T.	27	27		57%
4	Educational levels of respondents	47			

	High school	15	15		29%
	First degree and Higher	32	32		68%
5	Leadership Experience	47			
	0-10 years	27	27		57%
	11-20 years	12	12		25%
	21 and above	8	8		15%
6	Leadership Transition Training	47			
	Formal Training	12	12		25%
	Informal training	15	15		29%
	Not trained	20	20		40%

Appendix C

Leadership Transition Training Manual Outline

- I. Introduction
 - a. What is Leadership?
 - i. Spiritual Leadership
 - ii. Servant leadership
 - b. Leadership and generations
- II. Leadership Transition
 - a. Peaceful leadership transition
 - b. Effective leadership transition
- III. What the Bible teaches about Effective leadership transition
 - a. The Old Testament examples
 - i. Moses as an Existing Leader
 - 1. Initiates the Succession plan
 - 2. Healthy Relationship with the Successor
 - 3. Mentoring and Coaching the Successor
 - 4. Seeks guidance
 - 5. Makes the decision open to the people
 - 6. Blessing and Authorizing the Successor
 - ii. Joshua as the Successor
 - 1. Find Courage in God
 - 2. Stop Trying to be the other version of the previous leader
 - iii. Elijah to Elisha
 - 1. Leadership transition is required by God
 - 2. Persistence and Faithfulness until the end
 - iv. David to Solomon
 - 1. Prioritizing God's will
 - 2. Effective Leadership Transition between family members
 - 3. Preparing and Transferring the vision
 - b. The New Testament Examples of Effective Leadership Transition
 - i. John the Baptist to Jesus
 - 1. A Promoter and Focus Changer
 - 2. Joyful and Hopeful for the successor
 - ii. Jesus to the Disciples
 - 1. A Servant leader
 - 2. A Humble in service
 - 3. An Example in life
 - 4. A Delegator and authorizer
 - iii. Paul to Timothy
 - 1. How to recruit and select successor
 - 2. How to develop successor
 - 3. Encouragement and Follow up

- IV. Key principles for effective leadership transition
 - a. Plan for transition
 - b. Preparation for transition
 - c. Christ-Centered attitude on transition
 - d. Building team spirit between existing and emerging leaders
 - e. Understand Leadership has a Time Limit
 - f. Empower the Successor and make the transition on the right time
 - g. Being Patient
 - h. Allow God to shape character
 - i. Leadership transition is a promotion not a demotion
- V. Important tools in applying the Principles of Effective Leadership Transition
 - a. Prayer
 - b. Study God's Word
 - c. Love and Forgiveness
 - d. Highlight Jesus as the head
- VI. Barriers for effective leadership transition
 - a. Lack of planning
 - b. Lack of knowledge
 - c. Self-centeredness
 - d. Dictatorship
- VII. Issues that need clarity in relation with Effective leadership transition
 - a. Peaceful vs. Effective
 - b. Self-appointed vs. God called
 - c. Peak time vs. Declining
 - d. Character vs. Giftedness
 - e. Leadership Success vs. Transition Success
- VIII. For the practicality of effective leadership transition
 - a. The responsibility of existing leaders
 - i. Teaching
 - ii. Guiding
 - iii. Mentoring
 - iv. Sharing responsibility
 - v. Loving & caring
 - vi. Leading the transition
 - b. The responsibility of emerging leaders
 - i. Listening
 - ii. Following
 - iii. Obedience
 - iv. Persistent
 - v. Faithfulness
 - vi. Respect
 - c. The responsibility of the congregation
 - i. Prayer
 - ii. Support the transition process
 - iii. Accept the emerging leaders
 - iv. Facilitate for the outgoing leaders

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